

FACT SHEET 12 SAVING WATER

In this fact sheet you will find information about:

- the chlorinator cell
- controls
- selecting a suitable unit
- how much salt to use
- maintenance of the cell
- other chemicals needed

Saving Water



The average domestic swimming pool holds somewhere from 22,000-60,000 litres of water.

This amount is usually a once-only fill quantity and from then on the pool needs only to be topped up from time to time. Savings can be made both in costs and water usage by limiting the frequency and water quantity used in topping up.

Keeping the pool properly filtered and chemically balanced are just two of the ways of ensuring against unnecessary emptying of the pool and frequent backwashing. This will help save water.

Looking after the pool is really very simple. It is a combination of adequate filtration time and correct chemical treatment.

ADEQUATE FILTRATION

During the summer it is recommended that the filter should run for 8 to 10 hours a day and certainly whenever people are using the pool.

While ever the filter is operating, the surface of the water will be skimmed off, removing things like leaves and dust before they sink. To remove the dust and dirt collected by the filter, the filter must be cleaned.

Sand filters require backwashing. This procedure reverses the water flow through the filter and flushes the dirt down the drain. Only continue backwashing until the water in the sight glass provided or at the drain point is clean and clear. This should take no more than one or two minutes. After each backwash, a rinse cycle of about one minute must be run before returning to the filter setting. NB Always stop the pump before moving the multi-port valve.

Diatomaceous Earth filters (DE filters) also require backwashing. Best results are achieved by running a backwash cycle of 1 to 2 minutes followed by a 30 second rinse cycle and repeating this process three times. Once complete, the filter needs to be recharged with DE powder. Twice a year, the filter should be stripped down and the internals cleaned.

Cartridge filters are not backwashed. Instead the filter housing is opened and the cartridge(s) are cleaned. In all cases, the filter must have a functioning pressure gauge.

Backwashing should occur when the pressure gauge reads between 100-110kpa. Excessive backwashing can waste as much as 2,000 litres of water.

CHEMICAL BALANCE

You don't have to be a scientist to correctly balance your pool. There are three basic rules to follow. Firstly, adjust the Total Alkalinity level. Secondly, adjust the pH and lastly, ensure the required amount of sanitiser is added either manually or automatically.

By continually maintaining correct water balance the need for emptying your pool and the subsequent topping up can save thousands of litres of water annually. Most pool shops offer a professional water testing service. A sample taken to a professional can help ensure you're on the right course to healthy water chemistry.

CORRECT WATER LEVEL

Making sure the water level is only half way up the skimmer opening ensures the correct skimming action and also saves water. Do not overfill your pool. It reduces the effectiveness of the skimmer and wastes water.

COVERING THE POOL

More and more pool owners are discovering the advantages of heating their pools. With water heated to a pleasant 25°C, the pool can be enjoyed throughout the year. To reduce evaporation and the subsequent need to top-up, a pool cover is a wise investment. Covers not only save water but help keep the pool clean and reduce energy costs by reducing heat loss. The availability of rollers for covers makes it a quick and easy way of lowering costs and saving water.

LEAKS

Many pools in the Sydney area are now twenty or thirty years old and may be in need of attention. Make a point of thoroughly checking around the pool for any damp spots. Check the plumbing for leaks around valves or pipe joiners. One drip per second can waste up to 7,000 litres of water per year. A steady dribble could waste hundreds of thousands of litres per year – and add to your water bill.

Many pool owners confuse evaporation with leaking. If you suspect a leak a simple test can determine if the issue is in fact evaporation.

1. Place a bucket on the top step of pool weighted down with a brick.
2. Fill the bucket to the same level as the pool and mark with a pen or tape.
3. After 5 days compare the bucket and the pool levels. If they are similar then the water loss is evaporation. If the pool level is significantly less, it would indicate that a professional should be called to locate and repair a leak.

RECYCLED WATER

Properties in recycled water areas should have been equipped with at least one tap for each type of supply (potable and recycled water), as per Sydney Water Plumbing Guidelines. Pool owners in these areas are advised that they must fill their pool with drinking water, not recycled water.

When working with recycled water, exercise safe work practices and normal hygiene principles. As a precaution, ensure that cuts and skin grazes are appropriately dressed and covered in clean, waterproof dressings. Use potable water when cleaning wounds.

Recycled water can be used for the following:

- Toilet flushing.
- Residential garden irrigation.
- Washing cars, paths and walls.
- Filling ornamental ponds.
- Fire Fighting.
- Construction purposes.



Recycled water may not be used for the following: (check with your local council)

- Drinking.
- Cooking or other kitchen purposes.
- Personal washing, such as baths, showers, hand basins and bidets.
- Evaporative coolers.
- Clothes washing.
- Household cleaning.
- Swimming pools.
- Recreation involving water contact.
- Irrigation of fruit trees and crops that are eaten raw or unprocessed.