

The average domestic swimming pool holds somewhere between 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 backwashed. 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.

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.

### 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

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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.

## Safety Saves Lives and Water

Safety is one of the most important factors of swimming pool and spa ownership, particularly where small children are concerned. When ever groups of children are in the pool, “ bombing ” and “ horseplay ” can get out of hand so it is a good idea to make sure children are well supervised. By restricting this type of behaviour you not only avoid accidents but prevent water loss due to excessive splashing.

The NSW Recycled Water Committee, comprised of several organisations, including NSW Health and the Environmental Protection Authority, have issued guidelines regarding the use of recycled water. These state that *recycled water must not be used to fill swimming pools*. Standard sanitising methods may not destroy all viruses or parasites which could be present in recycled water, and would have little effect if there was contamination of recycled water by industrial chemicals or

illegal dumping. Pools should be filled with potable ( drinking ) water only.

## 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.

### 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 must not be used for the following:

- 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.