



# County of Santa Cruz

## Health Services Agency ♦ Environmental Health

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### **FAQ FOR POOLS ON -ONSITE WASTEWATER TREATMENT SYSTEMS (OWTS)**

1. Do all pools, spas and wading ponds need greywater sumps as part of the design?  
Commercial pools require greywater sumps, yes. For any domestic pools or spas on small lots where discharge will negatively effect neighbors will also require greywater sumps.
2. Does all filter backwash need to go into a sub-surface sump?  
Brackish water can harm plants and soils. It needs to be safely sequestered much like water softening equipment discharge. The sump should not cause erosion, landslides, etc.
3. Do pools using replaceable filter cartridges require a greywater sump?  
Depending on the volume, the pool may need a greywater sump.
4. Can someone bypass their septic tank and route the pool water to an existing leach line and use that as a sump?  
The sewage disposal is to provide treatment for wastewater from the home. Chlorine and salt are likely to kill the naturally occurring bio mat and prevent treatment causing your leach line to fail prematurely.
5. Does a sump need to be able to accommodate the entire volume of the pool?  
Generally no, sump should accommodate the backflush or the small amount needed to balance chemicals, approximately 10-25% of the pool volume.
6. Do percolation tests need to be run to a size a greywater sump for intermittent pool water discharge?  
No.
7. Is there a standard pool size sump? No, this will depend on pool size and what the lot size can accommodate.
8. Which of the following items requiring a sump also require a sump permit and what type of permit would it be? - Minor EH greywater system permit applications are \$637.00
  - A) Washing machines – . Greywater sumps that go into the ground require EH greywater permits. Laundry to landscape in sewerred area does not need an EH permit. The building department would issue this permit.
  - B) Hand washing sinks – An EH permit is required. Only water and soap should go into a greywater sump.
  - C) Pool filter backwash – An EH permit for the greywater sump is required.
  - D) Pool water drainage for pH balancing activities or rain events – An EH permit for the greywater sump is required.
  - E) Shower at the pool (outdoor shower) – An EH permit for the greywater sump is required.