

Bushfires and swimming pools

Fact sheet

If your property has been impacted by bushfire and you have a pool, you may need to undertake several actions before it is safe to use again.

Things to consider

Pool fencing

Damaged fencing must be fixed as soon as possible to meet pool safety standards.

Electrical safety

If you know or suspect that the bushfire has affected your pool's electrical equipment, have a licensed electrician inspect and declare it fit for use before you try to use it.

Restoring water quality

After a bushfire a pool can become contaminated with debris, embers and ash. These can impact the chemical balance of the water. To restore the water quality

- remove as much debris and ash from the pool and ensure the skimmer and pump baskets are clean
- turn on the pump to skim any remaining ash
- take a water sample to your local pool shop to be assessed. Upon assessment your pool shop should be able to advise what is required to safely rebalance the water in your pool
- if contamination is substantial, your pool shop may recommend the use of a flocculant. This will bind the contaminants together and cause them to drop to the bottom of the pool where they can be scooped or vacuumed out
- finally, clean your filtration unit. For cartridge filters, remove the cartridge and hose it thoroughly. For sand and media filters, backwash and rinse the filter.

If contamination is so extreme that your pool shop recommends emptying, sanitising and refilling your pool, contact your local council about disposing of the contaminated water as certain regulations may apply. Also, ask your pool shop for advice on how to safely empty your pool without damaging its structure. After the pool has been emptied, you'll need to clean and sanitise the entire pool, including surrounding structures and associated plumbing and treatment equipment.

Mosquitos

If you can't restore your pool soon after the bushfire, make sure you take action to prevent mosquitoes from breeding in the water. For further information please consult your local Queensland Health public health unit.

Further Information

- Pool safety and fencing standards are available at <https://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/construction/BuildingPlumbing/PoolSafety/PoolFencesSafetyBarriers/Pages/default.aspx>
- Mosquito control information is available at <https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/all/prevention/mosquito-borne/control>
- Contact 13 QGOV (13 74 68) for your nearest public health unit.