

# BULLETIN

## COASTAL HAZARDS

### Hurricane Precautions for Swimming Pools

#### Before the Storm

Never completely drain your pool. You do not need to lower the water level in the pool, but if you decide to, be sure to close your skimmer valve to prevent damage to the pump when the power is turned on.

Turn off all electrical power to the swimming pool pump, motor, lighting, chlorinators, etc.

If your filter pump is in an unsheltered area, have the motor removed and stored or wrap the motor with a waterproof membrane or plastic bag and tie it securely in place to prevent sand and driving water from entering the motor.

Remove all loose items from the pool area. It is not advisable to throw patio furniture or accessories into the pool. If it is necessary, however, remove them as soon as possible after the storm has passed. Heavy furniture may chip and damage the pool finish and the chemicals in the water will damage it.

Add extra chlorine to your pool to prevent contamination. The pool provides a handy source of water for washing and flushing if your house water supply fails.

If your pool area is screened, you may prevent costly damage to the frame structure by removing 1 or 2 panels of screen above the chair rail on each side to allow the wind to blow through. Don't remove the lower panels or panels overhead. Slip the pins out of the door hinges and place the doors in a protected area.

## After the storm

Do not empty the pool. High ground water can cause structural damage to an empty pool.

Superchlorinate the pool water. When the chlorine residual returns to normal, have the water tested for proper balance. Heavy rain upsets mineral balance needed for protection of your equipment and pool finish.

Remove all debris from pool with a rake and a skimmer before restarting the system to prevent clogged lines. Some chemical feeders require special care before starting the pump motor. Check with your pool company.

Remove any wrapping around the pump motor. If the motor has been submerged, it should be removed for professional cleaning and drying. If the pump has remained dry, turn on the electricity.

Check to make sure the pool is operating normally and that the water is circulating in the pool. Reset time clocks to show the correct time of day. Run the filter until the water is crystal clear and resume normal pool operation.

For further advice, call your swimming pool contractor or the National Spa and Pool Institute at 1-800-323-3996.

Adapted from the University of Florida Cooperative Extension Service's Disaster Preparedness and Recovery Notebook, published 1997.