



## Healthy Swimming/Recreational Water

### Healthy Swimming & Recreational Water Home

#### Pools & Hot Tubs

#### For Swimmers and Hot Tub Users

#### Animals and Pools

#### Raccoons and Pools

#### Finding a Dead Animal in the Pool

#### Birds and Pools

#### Model Aquatic Health Code

#### Design and Operation

#### Disinfection and Remediation

#### Regulation and Inspection

#### Certification, Training, & Education for Professionals

#### Oceans, Lakes, & Rivers

#### Injury & Skin Cancer

#### Recreational Water Illnesses (RWIs)

#### Outbreak Response Toolkits

#### Resources & Publications

#### CDC Programs & Projects

#### Data & Statistics

#### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Browse Healthy Swimming Topics

#### Fast Facts

#### Information for Specific Groups

#### Newsroom

### Healthy Water Home

#### Drinking Water

#### Healthy Swimming / Recreational Water

#### Global Water, Sanitation, & Hygiene

#### Other Uses of Water

#### Water-related Emergencies & Outbreaks

#### Water-related Hygiene

#### Water-related Data & Statistics

#### Diseases, Contaminants, & Injuries

[More »](#)

[CDC.gov](#) > [Healthy Water Home](#) > [Healthy Swimming & Recreational Water Home](#) > [Pools & Hot Tubs](#) > [Animals and Pools](#)

## Finding a Dead Animal in the Pool

Most dead animals in pools do not pose a health risk to swimmers. If you find a dead animal in the pool, following the simple removal and disinfection steps below will help ensure healthy swimming in the pool.

**Dead raccoons in pools, however, can pose a health risk to swimmers.** This is because raccoons might be infected with a worm called *Baylisascaris*, which can be spread to humans. For more information, go to CDC's [Raccoons and Pools page](#).

## What types of dead animals are found in swimming pools?

Many different types of domestic and wild animals — including skunks, birds, mice, gophers, rats, snakes, frogs, and bats — are commonly found dead in pools.

## Do dead animals in pools pose a health risk to swimmers?


Most dead animals in pools do not pose a health risk to swimmers. Many germs carried by animals infect only those animals, though a few of the germs they carry can infect people.

Most germs carried by animals are killed by chlorine within minutes in a well-maintained pool. However, to help ensure healthy swimming in a pool where a dead animal has been found, it is important to follow the simple steps below to remove the animal and disinfect the water.

## What should I do if I find a dead animal in the pool?\*

**Follow these steps to remove the animal and disinfect the water:**

- Close the pool to swimmers.
- Put on disposable gloves.
- Use a net or bucket to remove the dead animal from the pool.
- Double bag the animal in plastic garbage bags.
- Clean off any debris or dirt from the item used to remove the dead animal.
- Remove gloves and place them in the garbage bags.
- Close the garbage bags and place them in a sealed trash can to help keep wild animals away from the dead animal.
- [Wash your hands](#) thoroughly with soap and water immediately.
- Raise the free chlorine concentration to, or maintain it at, 2 parts per million (ppm); maintain the pH levels at 7.5 or less; keep the temperature at 77°F (25°C) or higher. The free chlorine and pH should remain at these levels for 30 minutes.
- Confirm that the filtration system is operating properly during this time.
- Disinfect the item used to remove the dead animal by immersing it in the pool during the 30 minute disinfection time.

\*These cleaning and disinfection steps are for animals commonly reported to be found dead in pools. Pre-weaned calves and lambs are often infected with [Cryptosporidium](#), a chlorine-tolerant germ, and could pose a health risk to swimmers if found dead in a pool. After removing a dead calf or lamb from the pool, decontaminate the water by following CDC's [Hyperchlorination to Kill Cryptosporidium](#)  [PDF - 207 KB] procedures.

## What should I do if I find a live animal in the pool?

If you find an animal in the pool and are concerned that it is still alive, call your local animal control officer for assistance.



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