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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 <u>Raccoons and Pools page</u>.

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 <u>Cryptosporidium</u>, 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 <u>Hyperchlorination to Kill Cryptosporidium</u> [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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Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1600 Clifton Rd Atlanta, GA 30333

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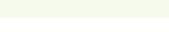












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