



Clean Up After a Wildfire

The main concern from wildfires should always be for the immediate safety of all involved. Extreme caution should be used when dealing with the restoration of swimming pools after a fire.

Active Fire Areas

These areas should be avoided by pool service technicians. Active fires can change course in seconds, especially in areas of high wind. Use extreme caution in and around any areas where wildfires are still active.

- Always be aware of where fires are active and plan your service route to avoid these areas.
- Plan and know several routes to escape should active fires change course.
- Carry protective gear such as respiratory masks, goggles, gloves and fireproof blankets.
- **Cal-OSHA has recently enacted an emergency regulation which states: All Employers Must Train and Protect Outdoor Workers from Wildfire Smoke.** This regulation includes having respirators on hand and providing training on proper use. For the entire regulation go to: <https://www.dir.ca.gov/OSHSB/documents/Protection-from-Wildfire-Smoke-Emergency-apprvdtxt.pdf>.
- Other emergency supplies include bottled water, safety flares and a battery powered radio.
- **Never cross an emergency barrier or enter an area of evacuation to service a pool.**

After the Fire

Clean up after a wildfire can take some time and should be pursued with care. Pools should be treated as follows:

- **Be aware of live downed power lines. If power has been off at the house, contact a licensed professional electrician to inspect all wiring and equipment.**
- Remove all larger debris as soon as is possible.
- Brush all surfaces thoroughly.
- Skim smaller material with a pool net.
- Make sure filter is clean and in operational order. Clean as necessary throughout restoration.
- Use 2 gallons of HASA Sani-Clor® per 10,000 gallons.
- Follow immediately with HASA Eco-Safe Clarifier to help remove small ash material to the filter.
- The use of HASA Eco-Safe Pool Enzymes can help break down unfiltered non-living organic waste and speed up getting the pool clear.
- Operate pump/filter continuously until water clears, and be aware filter might require a few cleanings during this process.
- Test for phosphates and treat with HASA Phos Out according to label directions.*
- Adding a good algae preventative, such as HASA Algi-Control, will also assist in speeding up the process and protect you from potential algae blooms.





Environmental Damage Awareness

The extreme heat from fires can cause the ground to bake—leading to a lack of absorption when rains come. Excessive erosion from fires could lead to flooding and mud flows during rains. Pool areas need to be protected with sand bags or other diversion methods immediately after fires to prevent an influx of mud and runoff water from entering the pool.

Firefighting Pool Pump Precautions

Homeowners in wildfire areas can also buy pumps that can be used to soak down their property. These pumps can typically work at a flow of 150 gpm and can disperse the contents of a 20,000-gallon pool within two hours. In some cases where water pressure becomes an issue during the fire, some departments may incorporate pumps in the pool to use the water for protecting homes. Pool techs should be aware ahead of time of this possibility and should check that hydrostatic relief valves are in place on these pools to prevent the pool vessels from popping out of the ground during these emergency use times. If there is a high groundwater table or if the pool is built over an underground spring, this could be a possibility. Pools that have been drained will need to be inspected for damage to surfaces and deck areas as well as all equipment connections.

In Conclusion

- Use extreme caution in areas where wildfires are active.
- **Always check ahead of time with emergency management personnel before attempting to enter neighborhoods where fires have been.**
- Wear smoke protection when necessary (breathing mask and goggles).
- Remember that wildfires can move fast and change course in seconds so it is best to stay out of the area.
- Shock with HASA Sani-Chlor®, use Eco-Safe Water Clarifier, HASA Eco-Safe Pool Enzyme, HASA Phos-Out and Algi-Control as needed for restoration of water quality after a fire.
- Check and inspect all equipment thoroughly during the clean-up process. If power has been shut off, consult a licensed professional electrician before turning on equipment.
- Filters may need to be operated continuously and require cleaning frequently during the clean-up process.
- Ensure that pools equipped with firehose pumps also have hydrostatic relief valves to prevent popping from rapid draining.
- Be aware of areas of erosion and take pro-active measures, such as sand-bags, ahead of rainstorms.

*Most firefighting suppressants, such as those dropped from the air, contain phosphate.

References: Effects of Wildfires on Pools, APSP Recreational Water Quality Committee (RWQC) September 2018. www.phta.org



**Active Fire Areas
Should be Avoided
by Service Techs**



**Watch for Downed
Power Lines**



**Phosphate Levels Can
Increase in Pools After
a Wildfire**

