Swimming pools

WaterRegsUK

What are the water fittings regulations/byelaws?

These national regulations protect drinking water by ensuring plumbing systems are designed, installed and used safely.

This leaflet highlights the key requirements of these regulations to help those installing, as well as those responsible for, swimming pools to comply.

When do they apply to swimming pool?

If a swimming pool has any form of mains water supply the regulations/byelaws apply.

How do you comply?

Ensure swimming pools are safe and do not contaminate, waste or unduly use drinking water by:

1. Notifying the local water undertaker at least 10 working days before altering or installing a swimming pool https://www.waterregsuk.co.uk/topics/notification
2. Preventing contaminated water from backflowing into the drinking water supply by installing the correct type and level of protection, usually a Type AA or AB air gap arrangement
3. Preventing waste and contamination by only using water fittings which are of an appropriate quality and standard
4. Never submerging hosepipes in the pool water or chemical dosing tanks

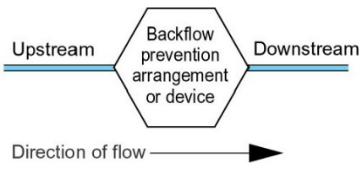
For further information please refer to the Water Regs UK website www.waterregsuk.co.uk.

Notification is a simple and essential check to help minimise the contamination risks to water supplies within premises as well as beyond, and to help prevent waste of water

Advanced notification is required for the installation of some swimming pools and is recommended in all circumstances. It is the best way to confirm compliance.

What is backflow and how do you prevent it?

Backflow occurs when fluid in a plumbing system flows in the opposite to the intended or normal direction of flow. The regulations/byelaws classify backflow risks by fluid categories or risks to health. Backflow is not theoretical rather an ever present threat to people's health.



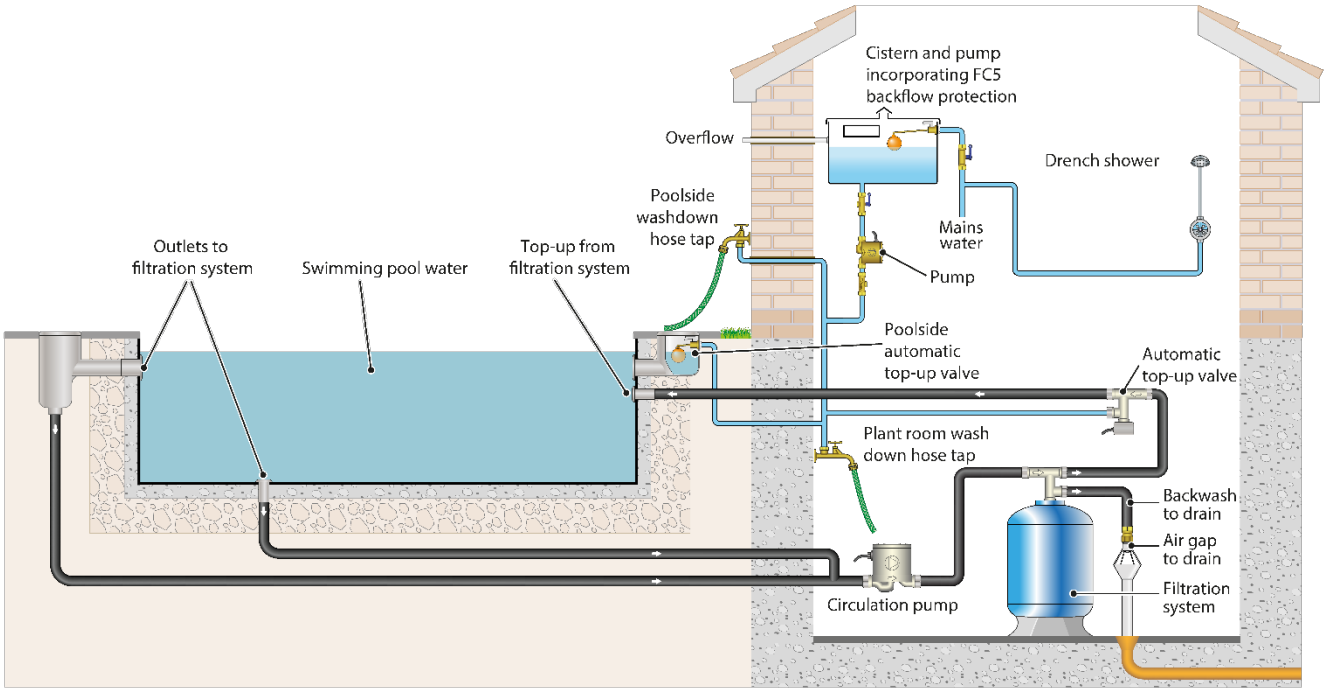
To prevent backflow, a backflow protection device or arrangement which acts as a barrier must be installed. The regulations/byelaws identify several different backflow prevention arrangements and devices, each having a rating based on fluid category and type of backflow.

What level of backflow risk is a swimming pool?

The swimming pool, which includes the associated plant, is a fluid category 5 contamination risk, requiring the installation of acceptable fluid category 5 backflow protection.

Backflow protection arrangements

To protect drinking water supplies on site and in the wider community, mains water supplies must be protected. Getting this right is why it is so important to notify and agree what is needed with the local water undertaker.



The supply to a swimming pool and associated equipment including plant (auto top ups and hoses, used for topping up or washing down at pool side) must be protected by a form of fluid category 5 backflow protection which physically separates the pool water from the mains supply. This is typically done by creating a suitable air gap at the point of supply, for example by installing a break tank incorporating a Type AA or AB air gap.

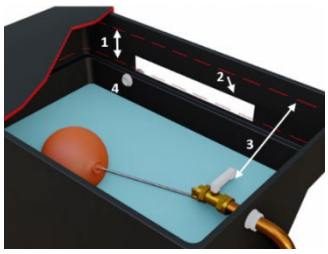


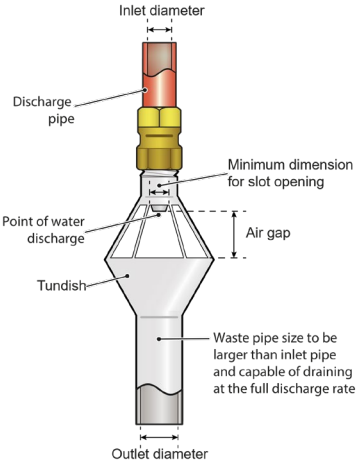
Illustration of a Type AB airgap

1. Air gap
2. Weir overflow
3. Lowest point of discharge
4. Warning pipe

Please note: auto top up systems are not a recognised form of backflow protection. Type DC arrangements are unlikely to be suitable.

Backwash arrangements

Backwash discharge pipework should never be directly connected to the wastewater system. They should be separated by an acceptable air break to drain arrangement.



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