

BACKFILL OF SWIMMING POOLS

The purpose of this information bulletin is to establish the requirements for the backfilling of existing pools. The method of backfilling approved by this Department depends on the intended future use of the fill. A pool may be backfilled with a structural compacted fill suitable for the support of footings or the pool shell may be left in-place and backfilled with an uncertified fill. In both cases, a grading permit is required.

I. BACKFILLING WITH STRUCTURAL COMPACTED FILL

A. Requirements for Placement of Structural Compacted Fill

In accordance with the City of Los Angeles Building Code (LABC) Section 7011.3, all material used to backfill swimming pools shall be placed on a natural undisturbed material or an approved compacted fill and compacted to a minimum of 90 percent relative compaction as determined by ASTM D 1557. Such fill shall be tested for relative compaction by a soil testing agency approved by this Department. A compaction report including a Certificate of Compliance setting forth densities so determined shall be submitted to the Department for review before approval of any fill is given.

1. Grading Pre-Inspection (GPI) report is required when the site is located in the Hillside Grading Area.
2. When required by the Department, a soil report prepared by a licensed soils engineer and containing recommendations for temporary excavation, grading specifications, and an allowable bearing pressure for the foundation design shall be submitted to the Grading Division for review and approval.
3. A Grading Permit shall be obtained with the total number of cubic yards of fill specified.
4. The pool shell shall be removed from the site.
5. The bottom of the excavation shall be inspected and approved by this Department and a soil engineer (when required) prior to placing of compacted fill.
6. A compaction report shall be submitted to the Grading Division for review and approval.
7. No foundation shall be constructed before the compaction report is reviewed and approved.

B. Inspections

The Department shall be notified when the grading operation is ready for each of the following inspections:

1. Initial meeting/inspection;
2. Bottom/excavation inspection; and
3. Final inspection.

II. BACKFILLING WITH UNCERTIFIED FILL AND LEAVING THE POOL SHELL IN-PLACE

Leaving the pool shell in-place and backfilling with uncertified fill is allowed in accordance with Exception No. 1 of LABC Section 7011.3.

A. Conditions of Approval

1. A Grading permit shall be obtained with a plot plan showing the pool location and showing distances to all buildings and property lines. The permit shall indicate that the fill is uncertified.
2. The backfill shall be used for landscaping purpose only.
3. The existing pool shall not be located on ground sloping steeper than 10 percent. In the event that the pool is located on ground sloping steeper than 10 percent, then the backfilling procedures in Part I of this bulletin shall be followed.
4. The plot plan shall have the following notes:
 - Drainage holes, a minimum of twelve (12) inches in diameter, shall be provided in the concrete in the pool bottom, a maximum of 8 feet apart to facilitate drainage. One hole shall be located in the deepest section of the pool shell.
 - Backfill shall consist of clean soil or gravel and shall be moistened and tractor rolled or tamped with a whacker into place.

B. Inspections

The Department shall be notified when the grading operation is ready for each of the following inspections:

1. Initial meeting/inspection;
2. Bottom inspection after required drainage holes have been made and prior to placing any fill; and
3. Final inspection.