

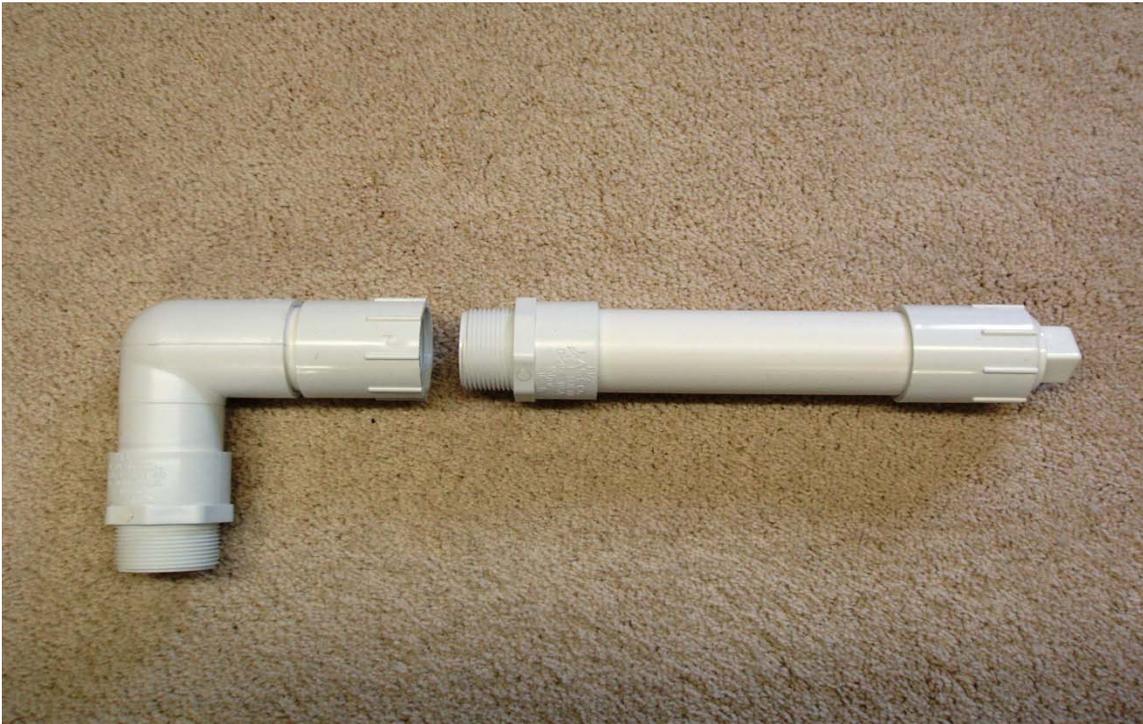
WINTERIZING A FIBERGLASS POOL

A fiberglass pool relies on water weight to keep it stable. The area outside and around the pool shell is filled with sand or other permeable material which allows water to flow through it. If the original soil is clay or other non permeable material then water can not flow through it. Now let's assume that water from a plumbing leak, sprinkler system or soaking rains has been filling the sand area between the pool shell and the original clay soil. There is now an unseen lake hidden in the sand outside the pool. This is not an unusual scenario. There are literally hundreds of pools just like this waiting for some unsuspecting pool service company or pool owner to lower their pool water for winterizing. In this example, if the pool water level is lowered and the water level outside the pool becomes higher than the water level inside the pool then water pressure from the unseen lake can lift the pool floor with enough pressure to rupture the fiberglass. This may happen right away or it may not show up until spring when the pool is uncovered. Surprise!! Need I say more?



Before proceeding to the next step for winterizing, get a chemical winterizing kit from your local pool store or distributor, and prepare the pool water for winter.

There is a safe way to remove water from the pool plumbing without lowering the water below the return inlets. Remove the directional flow fittings from each of the wall fittings. Glue a 1 1/2" street 90, slip by socket, to a 1 1/2" male adaptor. Glue a 1 1/2" female adaptor to the other end of the street 90. Glue a 1 1/2" male adaptor to another piece of 1 1/2" pipe. Be sure the pipe is long enough to reach the top of the water from the return inlet. Glue a 1 1/2" female adaptor to the other end of the pipe. Teflon tape or silicone the male adaptor and then screw a pipe and fittings into each of the return inlets with the end of the pipe turned up. Then Teflon tape the male adaptor and screw it into the female adaptor so that the end of the pipe is out of the water.



If the skimmer has a dedicated line to the pump, determine the size of the open port inside the skimmer. Glue a piece of pipe to the right size male adaptor for that port. Be sure the pipe will extend above the water line. Apply silicone or Teflon tape to the male adaptor and temporarily screw the extension fitting into place. If the skimmer has a diverter valve and two open ports, remove the diverter valve then install two extension fittings into place. Install an "Aquadoor" over the skimmer plate. Remove standing water from the skimmer.



"AQUADOOR"

Open all the pool equipment drain valves and leave them open. Remove the hair and lint strainer cover and strainer from the pool pump. Blow with compressed air or vacuum with a shop vac the extension fitting that leads to the pump. Blow or vacuum as much water as possible from each of the return inlet extensions and any other plumbing lines and fittings. In areas where frost lines are more than eighteen inches, pour non toxic antifreeze into each extension fitting until you see it standing at the bottom of the pipe, except fitting that leads to the main drain. In skimmers that have two open ports, slowly pour antifreeze into the main drain extension fitting until you see the colored antifreeze coming out of the main drain. Remove the extension fitting and replace it with a "Gizzmo". Remove the extension fitting from the port that leads to the pool pump and replace it with a "Gizzmo". If there are other pipes and fittings in the pool, one of above described winterizing techniques should work. This completes winterization. Cover the pool and look forward to spring.



"GIZZMO"

If the pool has therapy (spa) jets there is no way to attach an extension fitting to the jets. They are not threaded like returns. If the therapy jets have a common air manifold pipe, pour antifreeze into the pipe. If each jet has its own air tube, remove the air adjustment knob and pour antifreeze into each tube. When you see the antifreeze color coming out of each therapy jet, insert an expansion plug into the jet to seal it. Continue the process until each jet shows color and is plugged.

*If the pool water level must be lowered for winterizing, make every effort to determine if there is water outside the pool. If the pool has a dry well, connect a pump to the dry well pipe and run the pump until no more water comes out. Before you lower the pool water, look closely at the pool floor and keep a mental picture of its contour. If you see any change in the contour as the water level drops, stop draining the pool immediately and begin putting water back in. You **cannot** continue with winterization until the outside water is under control. Once you have completed the winterizing, put water back in the pool to its normal level.*