

## May Swimming Pools or Hot Tubs be Used for a *Mikveh*?

A *mikveh* is a gathering of natural sources of water measuring at least 191 gallons which is built permanently into the ground and allows for total immersion in one act. The details of *mikveh* make up a large section of the codes of Jewish law (see, for example, Shulhan Arukh, *Yoreh De'ah*, Section 201).

The essential factor that will determine whether such a gathering of natural sources of water (i.e., rainwater, melted ice or snow, cf. Rabbi Aaron Kotler, *Responsa Mishnat Rabbi Aharon*, no. 29) is kosher for use as a *mikveh* is how they are brought together. Water brought into the *mikveh* by people or in vessels is ineligible for a *mikveh*. This is called "drawn water". Similarly, water that comes to a basin through metal channels that are not connected to the ground is also unusable for a *mikveh*, (*Baba Kama* 67a; Rabbi Nissan Telushkin, *Sefer Tohorot Mayyim*, 1976, Section 7, p. 62ff).

A swimming pool or hot tub may be used for the purpose of *mikveh* if they are of the correct dimensions and depending on how the water is brought to it. (See Rabbi Telushkin, *op. cit.*, pp. 224–232 who discusses the entire matter and considers the difficulties.) Each case must be judged on the basis of its particular facts. Therefore, the swimming pool or hot tub in question should be analyzed by a specialist in the laws of *mikveh*.

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