

Carbon Filters

Steve Reed

I continue to read and hear how many koi are killed by chlorine during water changes. We are only human and we will make mistakes. But, this is one that may be safeguarded.

Some of the tactics koi hobbyists have employed are:

- Putting rubber bands on our wrist
- Setting alarms on our cell phones
- Sitting by the pond and hope we do not get distracted

And still, disaster can strike!

There is more that we can do. One solution that is not difficult and not expensive is to use filters between the incoming water supply and the pond. I use a regular household filter for drinking water that uses carbon filters. I actually use three in-line (three must be better than one!). In the past, I have used filters designed to filter out metals, but for more than two years, now I only use the standard carbon filter. All of these filters may be purchased online or cheaper still, at Lowes or Home Depot.



Three household water filter in-line.

Here is an extreme example from my own experience. I had 18 koi up to 24 inches in a temporary 500 gallon holding tank while their pond was under repair. I was making daily water changes because of the heavy fish load. Well, you may know what happens next. Mary and I decided we needed some things; so off to town we went. We live out in the country in south Oklahoma, so a trip to town for us may take several hours.

Three hours later on the way home, I remembered the water was still filling. Running toward the green house, I can see water flowing out for a hundred yards or more. But when I arrive at tank side - to my great relief, I see all the koi swimming normally, with absolutely no sign of any ill effects. That made a true believer out of me!

I now also use the filters to feed my flow-through system at around 25 gallons per hour. This rate comes to about 5% per day for my pond and filter 24 hours, seven days a week, with no chemicals and no problems.

The cartridges will become clogged and the water flow rate will be reduced, so they need to be changed. When the first cartridge becomes clogged, I remove it until the second becomes clogged. Then I replace both one and two, leaving the third in reserve.

Please note that sodium thiosulfate is still the main dechlorinator for large water changes. Carbon filters are only as an added safety measure.



Steve and Mary Reed with Taro Kodama - Dallas Show 2009.