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Environmental Health Update

Environmental and public health through leadership, partnership and science.

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Dear Pool Safety Professionals,

As temperatures continue to rise and swimming pool use is at its peak, the County of San Diego Department of Environmental Health wants to help you keep your swimmers healthy and free of waterborne diseases.

Swimming pools can be the source of many diseases, such as Giardia, Cryptosporidia, and E. Coli. It is important to take necessary precautions to keep pool users free from disease. One of the most effective ways to do this is by maintaining proper water chemistry.

Water Chemistry 101

Chemical Test	Pool	Spa, Wader, or Spray Feature
Unstabilized free chlorine (ppm)	1.0 - 10.0	3.0 - 10.0
Stabilized free chlorine (ppm)	2.0 - 10.0	3.0 - 10.0
Recommended free chlorine level (ppm)	**2.0 - 4.0**	**3.0 - 5.0**
pH	7.2 - 7.8	7.2 - 7.8
Bromine (ppm)	2.0 minimum	4.0 minimum

Sanitizer

Chlorine is the most common sanitizing agent and is effective in killing bacteria and keeping algae away. A DPD pool kit must be used to measure free chlorine concentrations. Free chlorine concentrations for a pool should range between 1.0 ppm–10.0 ppm (without Cyanuric Acid) or 2.0–10.0 ppm (with Cyanuric Acid). Free chlorine concentrations for a spa, wader, or spray ground should range between 3.0–10.0 ppm.

pH

pH refers to the acidity of your pool water. Too high or too low pH levels can cause irritation of the eyes and skin, affect pool surfaces and equipment, and decrease effectiveness of free chlorine. pH levels should be maintained between 7.2–7.8.

Cyanuric Acid

Cyanuric Acid is added to keep chlorine from burning off too quickly from the sun. If you are using Cyanuric Acid to stabilize your pool, maintain the concentration below 100 ppm.

Additional Tips to Prevent Waterborne Diseases

1. Only those trained should handle pool chemicals.
2. If chemical values are observed outside the approved range, the body of water should be closed until the chemicals have been adjusted accordingly.
3. Maintain daily chemistry reading **logs**, including when chemistry is adjusted.
4. Post diarrhea sign(s) at main entry ways to remind people to not swim if they have been sick.
5. Use an adequate test kit to check water chemistry.
6. Respond to fecal or other incidents immediately and take **proper action**.

Click on the picture to the right or this **link**to watch what the County's Department of Environmental Health is doing to ensure our public pools are safe year-round.

Please visit our **website** for additional information about the Department of Environmental Health's Public Swimming Pool Inspection Program.