



COWLITZ COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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Volume 6

THE TIDY POOL

March 2012

Cyanuric Acid

Cyanuric acid is added to pools in order to protect the loss of chlorine from the sun's ultraviolet rays. Cyanuric acid can be added by itself or is added through the chlorine chemicals often referred to as dichlor or trichlor.

It is unnecessary and not recommended to use cyanuric acid in hot tubs or indoor pools.

Current state rules require cyanuric acid levels to be kept at 90ppm or less. If you do use cyanuric acid the recommended levels are typically between 30-50ppm.

Do not wait for the cyanuric acid level to reach 90ppm before taking actions to reduce the cyanuric acid level in the pool. At 90ppm it would take draining at least half the pool water and refilling with tap water to reduce the level to 45ppm as the only way to reduce the levels is by dilution. The pool walls should also be scrubbed prior to draining since cyanuric acid tends to cling to walls and plumbing.

The reason for setting a maximum allowable level of cyanuric acid is the higher the level of cyanuric acid the less effective chlorine is at oxidizing materials and destroying disease causing pathogens.

When your cyanuric acid level is approaching the maximum allowable level you may want to keep a higher free chlorine residual than under normal operating conditions provided that it is maintained at the 10ppm or less required in code.

Updated ADA Rules

The US Dept of Justice has issued revised regulations for the Americans with Disabilities Act. The new regulations have sections that deal with accessibility to swimming pools, wading pools and hot tubs for Title II and Title III facilities.

Title II and Title III facilities include public facilities such as school districts and municipalities or places of accommodations such as motels, hotels, RV parks.

More information can be found at the DOJ ADA website www.ada.gov or by calling their toll free number ADA info line at 800-514-0301.

Reinspection Fees

This is a reminder that the health department is instituting reinspection fees to help offset the cost of time spent with facilities with violations requiring closure during an inspection. The reinspection fee is directed at those violations requiring closure and reinspection regardless of how quickly the closure violation is corrected.

Items that can lead to closure of pools/spas include: chemical issues, temperature issues for spas, water clarity, barrier issues, pumps/filters not working, main drain issues and lack of supervision.

In 2011 there were 18 different times that a facility had at least one of its pools closed and would have led to a fee. The vast majority of times that a pool or spa has a closure is related to maintaining proper chemistry.

If you are often finding your water chemistry to be inadequate during testing and are manually adjusting chemicals then more testing is needed throughout the day to identify the problem.

Operations Manual

Please remember that you are required to have an operations manual for your pool, spa or wading pool. The manual if used can be helpful in properly maintaining the pool to avoid closures. A guide for developing the manual is on our website.

We Have Moved

The Health Department moved from 1952 9th Avenue, Longview to 900 Ocean Beach Highway, Longview (which previously housed Washington State Labor and Industries).

The Health Department main phone lines will remain the same. If you need to contact Environmental Health Staff please call the main phone number at 360-414-5599



Program Contact Info

Main Line 414-5599

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Environmental Health

Secretary

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2011 Most Frequently Cited Violations

This article is a list of the most frequently cited violations during routine inspections for swimming pools and spas in 2011. Please take note that approximately 23% of all routine or follow-up inspections had closure violations observed during the inspection. This is the same percent of closures from 2010.

Low Disinfectant: The most frequently cited violation for the second year in a row was for low chlorine levels. Maintaining proper chlorine levels is the primary method of protecting swimming/spa pool users from illness. The chlorine level in pools and spas should be tested frequently to ensure proper levels are maintained at all times. If testing shows levels are not acceptable the pool needs to be closed until adjustments can be made.

Low pH: Maintaining proper pH is one of the most important aspects of having properly balanced pool water and the most effective disinfection levels. Low pH is an irritant to the swimmers and creates corrosive water. Corrosive water damages pool surfaces and corrodes pool equipment such as the heater.

Maintaining Proper Records:

Records are required to be maintained everyday the pool is open and be kept on file for at least three years. Log sheets are available on our website at

http://www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/health/environmentalhealth/living_environment/recwatersafety.htm. Properly maintained pool records can be useful during shift changes, to identify potential problems with the pool and for liability purposes.

Flow Meter Inoperable: (See Article Below)

Cyanuric Acid: (See Article on Page 1)

Test Kit Review

An updated test kit is important for every pool or spa operator. It is necessary for every pool/spa operator to be able to adequately test for disinfectant levels, pH, alkalinity and cyanuric acid (if used) or any other chemicals routinely used in the water.

Below is a list of things to consider when using a test kit.

1. Always follow the test kit instructions. Familiarize yourself with the test kit and its instructions
2. The reagents used to test for water quality in pools should be replaced yearly or if left exposed to intense heat or direct sunlight replace immediately. Mark the dates on your reagents to keep track of their age.
3. Store the test kit in a cool dry area away from chemicals.
4. Make sure reagents used go with the test kit you have. Do not mix and match reagents.
5. Take a representative sample of the pool water. Avoid taking samples in front of the inlets or directly on the surface of the water.

6. Use clean equipment for tests. Rinse between each test.
7. Water quality should be tested frequently as the water chemistry can change rapidly. At a minimum; disinfectant levels and pH need to be tested daily. Alkalinity and cyanuric acid (if used) need to be tested at least weekly.
8. When reading a maximum disinfectant level on a color comparator test kit, it is important to retest the pool water and dilute the new sample with drinking water (preferably bottled/distilled water) to get a more accurate reading for the disinfectant level. Also be sure you are using a DPD style test kit for disinfectant levels. Dilution instructions are available on our website.
9. Hold reagent bottles straight up & down when adding reagents to maintain accurate readings.
10. Record your water quality readings and adjustments made to the pool. Records are required to be kept for at least three years. Log sheets are available on our website.
11. Spa temperatures are required to be checked daily to verify the temperature does not exceed 104F.

Flow Meter Guidance

Flowmeters should be read regularly to verify that pumps are operating properly and that the pool water is being cycled through the treatment system often enough to protect the swimmers.

They need to be properly sized for both the pipe diameter it is installed on and for the pool flow in gpm.

They need to be located on a straight pipe before chemical addition. Typically you want at least 10 pipe diameters before the meter and 4 pipe diameters of distance after the meter before any turns in the piping or valves.

Area Certified Pool Operator Classes

Portland	March 12-13	Charlie Neidlinger	443-614-4789
Portland	March 28th	Lee Engvall	503-858-5352
Portland	April 26th	Lee Engvall	503-858-5352
Vancouver	May 10-11	Phil Oaks	360-241-7665

Please see www.NSPF.org for more Certified Pool Operator Class Listings.