



COWLITZ COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

905 Ocean Beach Highway Ste 1-B
Longview, WA 98632
TEL (360) 414-5599
FAX (360) 425-7531

www.co.cowlitz.wa.us/health

Board of County Commissioners

Michael A. Karnofski District 1
Dennis Weber District 2
James Misner District 3

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THE TIDY POOL

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Disinfection Basics

Why We Disinfect

Maintaining disinfectant in a pool or spa is one of the most important duties of any pool operator. Disinfectant is one part of the overall comprehensive treatment strategy for recreational water facilities.

Chlorine both acts as a disinfectant and an oxidant. The chlorine removes harmful bacteria and oxidizes organic waste materials that enter the pool from your users. Chlorine helps keep the pool clear and clean in order to provide a safe environment for swimming.

Maintaining Disinfection

- Check chlorine levels at following intervals:
 - Pools - At least once per day and more often during heavy use periods
 - Spas/Hot Tubs - At least 3 times per day
- Outdoor pools should have cyanuric acid in the pool to prevent chlorine loss. It is recommended to keep cyanuric acid levels between 30-40ppm.
- Cyanuric acid will reduce the effectiveness of chlorine. Do not allow level to get above 90ppm.

Other Issues

- High pH levels will significantly reduce the effectiveness of chlorine.
- Chlorine does not work instantaneously, depending on the germ it can take minutes or days to kill them.
- Cryptosporidium is not easily destroyed by chlorine and keeping ill people from swimming is the best way to prevent outbreaks from cryptosporidium. Also follow our guidance information if there are any accidents in the pool.
- Keep chlorinator maintained to prevent clogging. Do not use acids to clean chlorinators. Replace valves and tubing when clogged.
- Do not rely on hand feeding chlorine. If chlorinator is not maintaining residual, then repair or replace the chlorinator.

Requirements for Pool Parties, Swim lessons and Similar Events at Apartments, Hotels, RV Parks

If you operate a pool that serves apartments, condos, hotels, RV parks or similar limited use arrangements and wish to allow organized programs at the facility to non-residents or guests then the pool will be considered a General Use pool and additional requirements must be met.

Organized programs such as birthday parties, swimming lessons, sporting events, or renting out to other groups not staying at the facility are the type of organized programs that would result in more rigorous requirements.

Additional requirements for providing organized programs include:

- Six foot high fences around pool
- Enough showers and restrooms available at pool for users
- Lifeguards with backboards and rescue tubes are likely to be required as well

If you wish to hold any organized programs for non-residents then you need to contact this office to verify your facility can comply with the additional requirements.

No Diving Signs

Approximately 800 to 1000 people get spinal cord injuries from diving into water bodies in the US every year. It is estimated that 90% of diving injuries occur in water depths of less than six feet.

You may wish to consider posting "No Diving Signs" if your pool does not have properly constructed diving envelopes to remind patrons of the dangers of shallow water diving.

Note: Washington state regulations do not require posting of these signs.

SVRS Testing Mats

The Cowlitz County Health Department has acquired testing mats for testing SVRS pool pump shut-off systems. If you have a pool that is required to have additional main drain entrapment protection and use a SVRS system to shut-off pool pumps we will be periodically testing your system with our testing mats.

If you would like to have your SVRS system tested during the offseason please feel free to contact us to arrange a time to test the system.

Pool staff need to test the SVRS at least every six months and maintain a written log of test results. If you have questions about how to test your SVRS you can either check your manual for manufacturer instructions or contact this office to discuss testing.

Program Contact Info

Main Line 414-5599

Environmental Health Lead

Audrey Shaverx6440

Water Recreation Staff

Jesse Smith.....x6442

Vicki Washingtonx6444

Environmental Health

Secretary

Deborah Johnson.....x6441