

Swimming Pools and Spas COVID-19 Reopening Q&A Document

Updated 6/18/2020

The Governor's proclamation signed on June 10, 2020 permitted the reopening of swimming pools, but only to the extent that the facility takes reasonable measures under the circumstances of each establishment to ensure social distancing of employees and patrons, increased hygiene practices, and other public health measures to reduce the risk of transmission of Covid-19.

This document provides guidance on questions received from facilities and local inspection agencies. If you have any further questions, please contact the Swimming Pool and Spas Program at 515-281-3548.

1. What are *reasonable measures to ensure social distancing of employees and patrons, increased hygiene practices, and other public health measures to reduce the risk of transmission?*

Facilities should be prepared to employ social distancing by operating at a reduced capacity. Although the proclamation does not specifically state that pool facilities must operate at reduced capacity, it is strongly recommended as a method to achieve social distancing of patrons and employees. One way of reducing capacity is to [determine actual patron load](#).

Lifeguarded facilities should consult with their lifeguarding program to ensure that their practices align with recommendations.

The CDC has also developed [reopening guidance](#) for facilities. American Red Cross has also developed [reopening guidance](#).

Other public health measures such as posting signage, screening of staff and patrons, and prompt reporting of illnesses and isolation can be found in the [IDPH reopening guidance for businesses](#) [here](#).

2. The proclamation signed on June 10, 2020 states that swimming pools may reopen. Does this also include spray pads, wading pools, water slides, leisure rivers, and spas?

Yes. All swimming pools and spas as defined in 641-IAC Chapter 15 may reopen. This includes swimming pools, wading pools, spray pads, leisure rivers, water slides, wave pools, and spas.

3. What measures must a private HOA pool take to operate?

If the HOA has been granted an exemption from the department as outlined in 641-IAC 15.1(2), the pool is exempt from all requirements and is not required to follow the measures outlined in the proclamation, however it is strongly recommended that all pools take measures to keep employees and patrons safe.

4. How is the proclamation enforced?

The proclamation states that all peace officers are called upon to assist in the enforcement of proclamation provisions. If a facility is observed to be in violation of the proclamation, it should be reported to local law enforcement.

5. If a pool chooses not to reopen, what is the recommendation for the temporary closure of the pool?

A temporary or even seasonal closure of the pool does not require shutting down the recirculation systems and draining the swimming pools and spas. In most cases, it is much safer and more cost effective to keep the swimming pool or spa equipment operating and water chemically balanced to prevent damage to the pool/equipment, and to prevent biofilm, mold, algae or other outbreaks.

Recommendations:

- Do not drain the pool, this can damage the pool plaster or can damage the pool structure particularly in areas of high water table.
- Keep the recirculation system operating. If pumps are equipped with variable speed drives, the speed can be turned down, but it is important to keep circulating, filtering and disinfecting the water.
- Keep water balanced and chlorinated to prevent biofilm, mold and algae from forming.
- Keep up on basic maintenance and repairs to prevent more expensive damage or issues.
- If the pool, piping, and equipment are located indoors the pool water heaters can be turned off or the temperature setpoint lowered.

Please contact your local pool equipment supplier if you have questions on these recommendations.