

COVID-19 Guidance for Public Swimming Pools and Spas

Under the State of California “Blueprint for a Safer Economy” counties are placed in a color coded tier based on several factors. As Sacramento County moves through different color tiers, the restrictions on pools and spas are adjusted. The following is a summary of the restrictions under each color tier. Please check to see which color tier Sacramento County is listed under before adjusting operations. Sacramento County’s status can be found at <https://www.saccounty.net/COVID-19/Pages/default.aspx>

	Purple – Tier 1 Widespread	Red – Tier 2 Substantial	Orange – Tier 3 Moderate	Yellow – Tier 4 Minimal
Pools and Spas (Hot Tubs)	Outdoor pools and *spas may be open. Indoor pools and spas at fitness facilities must remain closed.	Outdoor pools and *spas may be open. Indoor pools and spas at fitness facilities must remain closed.	Outdoor pools and *spas may be open. Indoor pools may be open. Indoor spas must remain closed.	All outdoor and indoor pools and *spas may be open.
* Spas may be open if facility staff are available to monitor compliance with distancing requirements. If it is not possible to consistently maintain distancing, the spa shall be kept closed.				

Background

COVID-19, also known as the novel coronavirus, is a respiratory illness that is spread through the air via respiratory droplets from an infected person or by touching contaminated surfaces.

Requirements:

Proper pool chemistry and maintenance are essential to preventing the spread on COVID-19 in the pool water and surrounding area. Ensuring social distancing will also be a key factor in preventing the spread on COVID-19.

- **Check the pool chlorine level and pH level everyday – write down the results in a daily log. A daily log template can be found attached to this guidance.**
- **Maintain proper chlorine and pH levels at all times.**

	Free Chlorine Level Min/ Max		pH	*Cyanuric Acid (CYA)
	No Cyanuric acid/stabilizer used	Cyanuric acid/stabilizer used		
Pools	1 - 10 ppm Cl	2 - 10 ppm Cl	7.2- 7.8	100 ppm max
Wading Pools, Spas, and Spray Grounds	3 - 10 ppm Cl	3 - 10 ppm Cl	7.2- 7.8	100 ppm max

If the pool/spa does not have the proper amount of chlorine, the water is unsafe and may result in the spread of COVID-19 as well as other viruses and bacteria.

- If the pool/spa does not meet the requirements for sanitizer, you must close the pool until the chemistry is adjusted to the proper range.
- If a spa is closed, it may be barricaded, have signage and/or be drained to prevent use. If the spa is not drained, the water must still be maintained clean/clear so that the bottom drains are easily visible at all times.
- The owner/operator of each pool/spa facility should complete the attached “Swimming Pool/Spa Disinfection Protocol”. The completed protocol should be maintained on site and available for review.

Responsible Party

The pool/spa owner is responsible for the health and safety of the pool and spa. The pool service company is not the responsible party. If the pool/spa cannot be tested daily and the pool area cannot be kept clean and disinfected, owners should consider keeping the pool/spa closed.

Inspections

Specialists with the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department (EMD) conduct routine inspections at permitted pools/spas annually. Please contact EMD with any questions.



Sacramento County Swimming Pool/Spa Disinfection Protocol

This protocol shall be completed for every public pool facility located in Sacramento County. Keep a copy of the completed protocol on site and available for review.

Facility Name:			
Facility Address:			
Facility Contact Person:		Phone #:	
Pool Service Name:		Phone #:	

Signage – samples

- Signage must be posted at each public entrance of the pool/spa enclosure to inform all entering that they should:
 - Avoid entering the enclosure if they have a cough or fever;
 - Wear a face covering when not actively in the water;
 - Maintain a minimum 6 ft. distance from one another; and not shake hands or engage in any unnecessary physical contact.

Disinfection Protocol and Oversight

- Designate a person to be responsible for completing the “Swimming Pool/Spa Disinfection Protocol” (this document) and ensuring that the protocol is being followed. For an HOA this should be the person responsible for the pool/pool area and who is a point of contact for pool inspections (not the pool service).

Name:

- Restrooms and showers must remain open to pool/spa area users. Designate a person to be responsible for monitoring any restroom or changing facilities to ensure that facilities are properly stocked with soap, paper towels, and running water.

Name:

Disinfection of Pool/Spa Water, Pool Area and Ancillary Facilities

- Measure the chlorine and pH level in the pool/spa every day. Use a DPD chlorine test kit to check for free chlorine level. If the pool/spa does not have enough chlorine or the pH isn't in the proper range, close the pool/spa until the chemistry can be adjusted to the proper amount.

Pool/spa will be tested on the following schedule:

Day	Time	Person
Monday		
Tuesday		
Wednesday		
Thursday		
Friday		
Saturday		
Sunday		

- If pool/spa facilities are in continuous use, frequent disinfection of the areas listed below is recommended. For less frequently used pool/spa facilities, disinfection between users is recommended. Disinfection will occur on the following schedule:

Name/Title of person performing disinfection:
Disinfection schedule
Entry/exit gate and door handles:
Pool/spa handrails:
Restroom facilities:
Shower handles:
Changing room benches and lockers:
Other common touch points:

Please Note: Frequency of restroom and changing room disinfection should be increased if the volume of pool/pool area use increases.

Deck Furniture - Disinfection and Social Distancing Requirements

- Set up a system so that deck furniture is cleaned and disinfected after each use. If deck furniture cannot be monitored/cleaned/disinfected, consider removing, storing, or labeling tables and chairs to prevent use.
- All chairs and tables must be set up to maintain 6 ft. social distancing. Remove, store, or label excess tables and chairs to prevent use. Ensure that the spacing of the chairs and tables still provides a clear deck space of 4-feet around the pool.
- Eliminate access to drinking fountains. Post signs or turn off water to drinking fountains.

Limit Guests and Pool/Spa Users

- Limit the number of persons in the pool/spa area to an amount where 6 ft. social distancing can be easily maintained.
- In a lap pool, limit occupancy to two swimmers per lane. If lanes are less than 8 feet wide, consider limiting swimmers to 1 per lane.
- In a spa, ensure that at least 6 ft. of distancing is maintained at all times between hot tub users not from the same household or limit its use to one household group at a time.
- For locations that do not have an onsite person designated to monitor the pool/spa area users, a system should be in place to limit the number of persons in the pool (ex. reservation system or sign-up board) and limit the use of the pool area to residents only. Without facility staff to monitor compliance, spas must remain closed.
- Avoid hosting activities that promote group gatherings, where people from unrelated households will not be able to maintain 6 ft. social distancing. (A face covering must be worn whenever 6 ft. of social distancing cannot be maintained.)

Additional Guidance for Aquatics Classes, Swim Teams, Aquatic Facilities

Group classes and events may be held as long as 6 ft. social distancing can be maintained and face coverings are worn when the group is assembled on the pool deck.

Please Note: *The group size (cohort) for swim teams varies depending on the square footage of the pool deck. Typically for swim teams, 220 lineal feet of available pool deck space for chairs, would equal to about 25 swim team members. The best way to execute this is to designate blocks of pool time available for swim teams to visit the pool each day.*

- Provide physical cues, visual cues, and signs to assist staff, patrons, and swimmers with social distancing. (e.g., lane lines/ropes in the water, tape on the decks, floors, or sidewalks)
- Consider implementing reservations for pool use or implementing other mechanisms to support physical distancing. This could include reserving full-lanes for individual lap swimming and half-lanes for individual household use.
- Encourage patrons to bring and use their own towels wherever possible. If the facility is providing them, launder towels according to the manufacturer's instructions. Use the warmest appropriate water temperature and dry items completely. Handle towels with disposable gloves and minimal disturbance, i.e., do not shake them.
- Discourage people from sharing items, particularly those that are difficult to clean and disinfect or those that are meant to come in contact with the face (e.g., goggles, nose clips, and snorkels).
- Encourage patrons to bring their own equipment, rather than using shared equipment.
- If the facility is supplying equipment, such as kick boards, pool noodles, and other flotation devices, ensure that there is enough equipment so that patrons do not share the same items in a class. Clean and disinfect the items after each use. (Chlorinated pool water is not adequate for disinfection of multi-use items/surfaces)
Please note: For high touch surfaces where chlorine bleach may be used, the CDC recommends mixing 1/3 cup of chlorine bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented bleach or "no-splash" bleach.
- For indoor aquatic venues, introduce and circulate outdoor air as much as possible by opening windows and doors, using fans, or other methods. Do not open windows and doors if doing so poses a safety risk to staff, patrons, or swimmers.
- Where feasible, install impermeable physical barriers such as Plexiglas where staff and patrons must interact and physical distancing is difficult.

- Ensure that lifeguards who are actively lifeguarding are not also expected to monitor handwashing, use of cloth face coverings, or physical distancing. Assign this monitoring responsibility to another staff member.
- Lifeguards must wear a face covering whenever they are not immediately prepared to enter the pool and make a rescue.
- When feasible, it is recommended that swim lesson and group activity instructors teach from the pool deck. For those swim classes that require face-to-face or close contact, use a parent or member of the same household to be in the water with the child, or have the swim instructor wear a face covering and work with the student in a one-on-one capacity. Participants of group swimming lessons, group fitness classes, and spectators on the pool deck should always maintain social distancing of 6 ft.

Prepared by:	
Title:	
Date:	

Resources

[Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Swimming Pool Guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html)

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html>

[California State Guidelines for Fitness Facilities](https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness--en.pdf) – (aquatics guidance found here)

<https://files.covid19.ca.gov/pdf/guidance-fitness--en.pdf>

Summary of Revisions

6/15/20: Initial version

Latest revision

8/25/20: Updated guidance for lap swimming.

9/8/20: Updated wording on page one to “current Public Health Order”.

9/30/20: Updated to include color tier restrictions in alignment with State of CA requirements

11/3/20: Updated to align with State guideline allowing spas to open

PHO: 10/13/2020

POOL/SPA DAILY MAINTENANCE LOG

Facility Name:			Minimum Turnover Rate (GPM):		
Facility Address:			Month/Year:		
Date	Chlorine residual (free chlorine)	pH	Chemicals Added (type and amount)	Temp (°F) <small>(104°F max)</small>	Other Maintenance (backwash etc.)
1					
2					
3					
4					
5					
6					
7					
8					
9					
10					
11					
12					
13					
14					
15					
16					
17					
18					
19					
20					
21					
22					
23					
24					
25					
26					
27					
28					
29					
30					
31					
Monthly cyanuric acid test results: _____ ppm. Date: _____					

	Free Chlorine Level Min/ Max		pH	*Cyanuric Acid (CYA)
	No Cyanuric acid/stabilizer used	Cyanuric acid/stabilizer used (tablet feeders)		
Pools	1 - 10 ppm Cl	2 - 10 ppm Cl	7.2- 7.8	100 ppm max
Spas, Wading Pools, and Spray Grounds	3 - 10 ppm Cl	3 - 10 ppm Cl	7.2- 7.8	100 ppm max
<i>If using bromine instead of chlorine: Pools: 2.0 ppm min., Spas, wading pools, spray grounds: 4.0 ppm min.</i>				

FOLLOW THESE 5 SAFETY STEPS

to keep us all healthy

1

STAY HOME IF YOU DON'T FEEL WELL

Or if you tested positive for COVID-19 or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days



2

STAY 6 FEET AWAY FROM PEOPLE

who don't live with you, both in and out of the water and avoid sharing items with other people



3

WEAR A CLOTH FACE COVERING

when not in the water*

* Don't place cloth face coverings on children under age 2 or anyone who has trouble breathing or is unconscious, weak, or otherwise unable to remove the cover without help.



4

WASH YOUR HANDS OFTEN with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol



5

COVER YOUR COUGHS AND SNEEZES

with a tissue or your elbow, throw the tissue in the trash, and wash your hands



Now, **let's swim!**



SACRAMENTO COUNTY

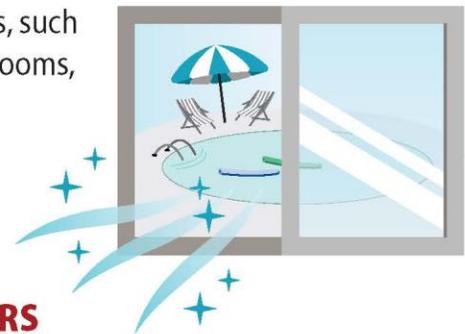
cdc.gov/coronavirus
Sacramento County Environmental Management
Department: emd.saccounty.net

DAILY CHECKLIST FOR STAFF

Public pools, and water playgrounds



- Remind staff, patrons, and swimmers to **WASH THEIR HANDS OFTEN** with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol
- ENCOURAGE WEARING CLOTH FACE COVERINGS** for staff and patrons **2 years and over** who are not swimming
- MAKE SURE THERE ARE ENOUGH SUPPLIES**, such as soap, hand sanitizer, paper towels, tissues, and no-touch trash cans
- CLEAN AND DISINFECT** frequently touched surfaces, such as tables, lounge chairs, pool noodles, door handles, restrooms, and other equipment
- INCREASE VENTILATION** in any indoor areas by opening windows and doors
- ENCOURAGE STAFF, PATRONS, AND SWIMMERS** to stay home if they do not feel well, tested positive for COVID-19, or were exposed to someone with COVID-19 in the last 14 days
- POST SIGNS TO PROMOTE HEALTHY BEHAVIORS** that prevent COVID-19, make announcements on PA systems, and include messages in e-mails, on websites, and social media
- MODIFY LAYOUTS AND ARRANGEMENTS** of chairs, tables, and entry/exit areas to keep people who do not live together 6 feet apart



Now, **let's swim!**



[cdc.gov/coronavirus](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus)
Sacramento County Environmental Management
Department: [emd.saccounty.net](https://www.emd.saccounty.net)