

## WELCOME TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT POOL SAFETY NEWSLETTER

Sacramento County Environmental Management Department  
Environmental Health Division  
10590 Armstrong Ave, Suite B  
Mather, CA 95655

Share this newsletter  
with your pool  
maintenance person!

Environmental Health Specialists are available in person or by phone (916) 875-8440 from 8 am to 10 am.



## Swimming Pool/Spa Workshop

Provided by the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department

If you own, operate, or service the following Swimming Pools or Spas:

Apartment Complex · Hotel or Motel · Condominium · Homeowners Association ·

Health and Fitness Club · Park · School · Aquatics Facility

Come to this FREE workshop!

Your facility WILL be inspected in 2016 - Be Prepared!

Come participate in a FREE training presented by the Sacramento County Environmental Management Department on pool and spa regulations that apply to fencing/gates, signage, chemistry, records/daily logs, recirculation equipment, SVRS, suction covers and more.

Only 5 Sessions - Call to reserve your spot soon!

Dates: Wednesday, May 25, 2016  
Wednesday, June 8, 2016  
Wednesday, June 22, 2016  
Wednesday, July 6, 2016  
Wednesday, July 20, 2016  
Time: All classes: 1:30 – 3:30 pm  
Location: Sacramento County EMD  
10590 Armstrong Ave  
Mather, CA 95655

Call (916) 875-8440 or email [newlandt@saccounty.net](mailto:newlandt@saccounty.net) (include facility name and number of attendees) to sign up

SACRAMENTO  
COUNTY

## ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT 2016 SWIMMING POOL/SPA NEWSLETTER

10590 Armstrong Avenue Suite B • Mather, CA 95655 (916) 875-8440 • Fax (916) 875-8513  
[emd.saccounty.net](http://emd.saccounty.net)

### Yes, These Are a Big Deal

**Check these items before opening your pool or spa.**

**Gate** – Make sure it closes by itself and latches when opened about 1 foot.

**Body Hook and Life-Ring** – Life-saving equipment should be easy to see from the edge of the pool. Make sure it can be easily reached and used.

**Fence** – Make sure there are no missing boards or rails and that there are no openings over 2" under the fence (4" if over concrete). Ensure that nothing has been placed by the fence that can be used for climbing over the fence.

**Main drain/equalizer line covers** – Get in the pool or use a body hook to make sure the covers are securely fastened and not broken. Even lightly damaged covers or missing screws can result in pool closure.

**Water Clarity** – You must be able to clearly see the main drain at the bottom of the pool. If not, keep the pool closed until the water is completely clear.

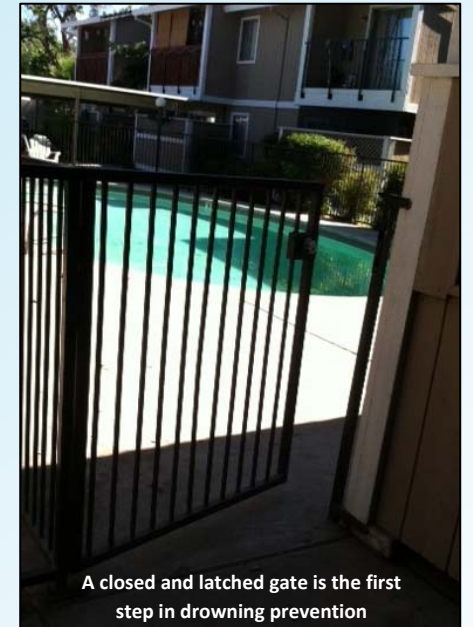
**Test Kit** – Test kits and chemicals have expiration dates. If your kit has been exposed to a lot of heat or sun, you may need to purchase a new kit. Make sure the kit has a DPD test for free chlorine.

**Chemistry** – Free chlorine in pools that use stabilizer must be a minimum of 2 ppm; 1 ppm for pools that do not use stabilizer; and 3 ppm for all spas. Free chlorine maximum is 10 ppm. The pH is required to be 7.2-7.8.

- **Note:** Inspectors will be closing pools and spas with free chlorine concentrations above 15 ppm.

**Daily Records** – Free chlorine and pH levels must be checked and written down every day the pool is open. Cyanuric acid should be tested and logged at least once a month. Keep records for two years.

**Timer** – Recirculation equipment should be on a timer. Make sure the timer is set properly and that the equipment is ON whenever the pool is open.



A closed and latched gate is the first step in drowning prevention

### Is Your Drain Cover 5 Years Old? It May be Expired!

All approved covers have expiration dates. Many covers expire after 5 years; however the expiration dates range from 3-7 years depending on the manufacturer. Even if the drain cover looks ok, the plastics used in these covers are subject to water, chemical and UV exposure that can reduce their strength. The expiration date is stamped on the cover which is impossible to read from the pool deck, so you may need to check your records for the type of cover and installation date. The manufacturer should have the lifespan listed on their website.

If you cannot easily determine the expiration date, and it has been 5 years since the last replacement, EMD recommends scheduling a licensed pool contractor to replace the drain cover. When replacing drain covers, the licensed pool contractor needs to submit a new certification letter to EMD. Contact EMD Plan Review for information at (916) 874-6010.

## Ask the Inspector...

**Q. I heard that salt water systems are better since they don't use chlorine. Is this true?**

**A.** A salt pool is a chlorine pool. Instead of adding chlorine to the pool from tablets or liquid, the salt that is dissolved in the pool water is altered through electrolysis to form chlorine that is fed into the pool water. The same chlorine requirements apply to a standard chlorinated pools and saltwater pools. There are many articles on the internet about the benefits and drawbacks of both systems.



**Q. My tenants are complaining that I use too much chlorine because of the chemical smell is strong and their eyes turn red from the pool water. Should I use less chlorine?**

**A.** It's not the chlorine that irritates the eyes and causes strong odors. This is caused by chloramines. Chloramines form when chlorine combines with ammonia and nitrogen from perspiration, urine, saliva, sputum and fecal matter – yuck! The most common way to remove chloramines from pool water is to add a lot more chlorine, also called super-chlorinating. "Breakpoint Chlorination" must be reached where total oxidation takes place and the chloramines are destroyed. Swimmers and bathers should not enter the water until the level of chlorine has dropped to 10 ppm or less. EMD strongly recommends consulting with a pool care professional for guidance in eliminating chloramines.

## Fecal Accidents, Yeah it Happens...

When fecal, vomit, or blood contamination occurs, close the pool and instruct all users to exit the pool or spa immediately. Do not allow anyone to enter the pool or spa until all the following steps are completed.

### Removal

Immediately remove as much of the contaminating material as possible using a net or scoop and dispose of it in a sanitary manner. Later, make sure to clean and disinfect all equipment used during this step.

### If the contamination consists of formed stool, vomit, or blood.

Keep pool closed and raise the free chlorine residual for the pool or spa to at least 2 ppm or higher and keep the pH at 7.5 or lower for 25 minutes or longer.

### If the contamination consists of diarrhea or a loose stool.

Keep the pool closed and increase the free chlorine concentration to 20 ppm and maintain the concentration for at least 13 hours. The pH should be kept between 7.2-7.5.

If the pool water contains stabilizer/cyanuric acid, increase the free chlorine concentration to 40 ppm or higher and reduce the pH to 6.5 or lower for a minimum of 30 hours. Pool may be re-opened after free chlorine levels fall below 10 ppm and pH is raised to at least 7.2.



## Even Pools Can Have Too Much of a Good Thing



Chlorine helps keep pool water clean and safe. The free chlorine concentration in pools with stabilizer/cyanuric acid must be maintained between 2–10 ppm. Pools without cyanuric acid must maintain free chlorine between 1–10 ppm. Spas, wading pools, and spray grounds need to keep free chlorine between 3–10 ppm. Unfortunately, many pools and spas are getting too much chlorine. Chlorine levels over 10 ppm were documented at 227 different pools and spas in Sacramento County during the 2015 inspection season! Chlorine concentrations above 10 ppm are a violation of state code. Inspectors will be closing pools and spas with free chlorine concentrations above 15 ppm.

To reduce the chlorine concentration, turn off the chlorine feeder, but keep the recirculation system running. Adding some fresh water will help. Check back after a day and the concentration should start going down. Once the chlorine concentration is below 10 ppm, you may turn the chlorine feeder back on. For faster reduction in chlorine levels, consult a pool care professional.

*FYI – When testing for chlorine, DPD tablets and drops can actually bleach out when chlorine concentrations are very high. You may see a flash of pink and then the water will turn clear. Don't add more chlorine! Consult a pool care professional.*

## **Are you upgrading your equipment or resurfacing your pool/spa? Contact EMD first!**

If you are changing your pump, filter, chlorinator, SVRS, drain covers, plumbing, or planning to resurface your pool – please call EMD. Many of these items require a minor plan review; some require signed certifications from licensed contractors. EMD Plan Review staff is happy to provide guidance. Call (916) 874-6010 to speak with the EMD Plan Review staff.

## News Flash

**California State Pool Code** – The codes that apply to public pools can be found through a link on the EMD website at [emd.saccounty.net/EH/Pages/RecHealth.aspx](http://emd.saccounty.net/EH/Pages/RecHealth.aspx)

**New Management?** – If your facility has changed management companies, please let us know! Also, please note, a new permit is required for all ownership changes. Help keep our records current and call us when your facility's contact information changes: (916) 875-8440.

**EMD Payments Online** - You can use your credit card to pay health permit fees from your business or your home. Log on at: [www.apps.saccounty.net/payments/](http://www.apps.saccounty.net/payments/)



## Palintest Kits

You may see your inspector using a new test kit during their inspection. EMD has transitioned to using the Palintest. This test kit uses a highly accurate photometric testing unit that removes the subjectivity of color comparison by the human eye. During inspections, pools and spas will be tested for free chlorine, pH and cyanuric acid.

If you have any questions about your test kit, please ask your inspector.

