



# THE HEALTH AND SAFETY BENEFITS OF PROPERLY MAINTAINING YOUR POOL AND HOT TUB

## What You Need to Know

The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA), National Environmental Health Association and National Drowning Prevention Alliance want to remind you that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has stated “There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools and hot tubs. **Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection** (e.g., with chlorine and bromine) of pools and hot tubs should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19.”

Additionally, the World Health Organization states that controlling water quality is necessary to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases. The COVID-19 virus is deactivated quickly following proper chlorine or bromine concentrations in pools and hot tubs.

Without proper pool and hot tub maintenance various pathogens can grow, such as E. Coli. It can also create a breeding ground for mosquitoes and the diseases they carry, like West Nile Virus and Zika Virus.

Stagnant pool water can develop in pools that have been closed for the winter. This condition can exist on top of the covers and in the pool water itself. As temperatures increase, public health and safety hazards emerge, as many of these covers **do not** qualify as safety covers.

Drowning remains a leading cause of accidental injury death in the United States. With backyards in greater use this spring, it is critical that standing water be removed from pool covers and necessary repairs, cleaning and maintenance be performed to get pools and spas “swim ready.”



The downturn in the California housing market caused a large number of neglected pools which were associated with a 276% increase in the number of human West Nile virus cases during the summer of 2007.\*

**Proper maintenance and sanitation are essential to prevent disease transmission in both public aquatic facilities and private backyard pools.**

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### TIPS FOR POOL OPERATORS AND HOMEOWNERS

#### 1. Do not drain the pool.

If you have a plaster pool, removing the water will dry out the plaster. This will cause the plaster to crack and potentially fall off the concrete shell. It is very expensive and time consuming to reapply plaster to an existing pool shell.



#### 2. Consider groundwater

If the water is drained from the pool, all of the water weight is removed from the pool shell. Groundwater may be high during the spring rainy weather and snow melt. That high groundwater table may lift the pool shell out of the ground, thus destroying the vessel.

#### 3. Continued maintenance is critical

Simply, recirculation and disinfection are critical even if no one is using the pool. Continued maintenance includes water testing, chemical adjustments, brushing, vacuuming, and backwashing. All must be done to ensure the chemicals in the water are evenly distributed and are effectively preventing disease.

#### 4. Maintain water quality

Without routine maintenance and water quality checks, the pool will quickly turn into a swamp. Algae will develop if pools are not brushed and vacuumed. Once algae get rooted in the pool plaster, it is very difficult to remove, as the photo shows. It is recommended that the pool water chemistry, including disinfectant residual and pH, be checked and adjusted a couple times per week.



#### 5. Circulation

It is recommended that you run the pool pump and circulation system for a couple hours every day. If there are no bathers added to the pool, the need for chlorine contact time and circulation is reduced.

#### 6. Secure the enclosure

At all times the enclosure around your pool must be durable and secure. If the pool is closed, be sure all doors, gates and windows that allow access are closed and locked.

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Without properly maintained pools and hot tubs, community health issues will compound the challenges facing our healthcare infrastructure.