



## **Pandemic Proof Your Pool**

### **“an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure”**

We are now approaching the beginning of pool season; except we are in the midst of an unprecedented pandemic. As pool professionals we are always looking to seek the latest information from various state and federal agencies so we can continue to serve and educate the swimming pool community. We have been in constant contact with our suppliers and manufacturers to make sure we are well stocked for summer. There is no question that things are going to be different for all of us. We have been answering a lot of phone calls recently asking us “what do we do, should we open the pool?” Much like you we have more questions than answers on how the future will play out. What we do know is the science to protect your pool and the know how to keep your pools safe and problem free. We are strongly recommending that the pools be opened on schedule one of two ways.

Option one would be to fully start the pool and have it ready to go. This would also provide the aesthetic value and the state of mind of residents to see some peaceful blue normalcy.

Option two would be to start the pool so the circulation system can run, and recover the pool. This will allow the pool to stay healthy and keep the fence jumpers out... I'm sure many of you have some stories about that. When the ok is given to allow bathers in to the pool area the cover can be removed and will be ready to go.

The other option you have is to leave the pool closed entirely for the season. This is one of the questions we also have been receiving. This is definitely the worst option to maintain the condition of the pool. I know I have personally worked with many of you and we all know the expensive renovations, repairs, and work that have gone into these pools. We need to protect these pools and ultimately the investments made by our communities. Below are some of the many problems we are trying to avoid within our pools. If you were to choose this option the water level should be pumped down below the returns. Also the pool should be re-winterized in the fall to make absolutely sure no water seeped into the lines and that the plugs are still in good shape as poor water balance can deteriorate the plugs very quickly. Also **DO NOT DRAIN YOUR pool!!!** This can ruin some plasters, cause the pool to shift, or even have hydrostatic pressure lift the pool out of the ground. Pools should never be drained without contacting a licensed pool professional first.

Water Balance:

Without proper chemical balance the water will either become acidic, corrosive, basic, or aggressive.

The pH will not be regulated. This can rapidly deteriorate the pool, anything from damaged and stained plaster to scale formation and paint failure.

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**Page 1 of 2**



The calcium hardness levels will also not be able to be maintained. Water will seek its own calcium and can pull it from the structure of the pool. Water can pull calcium from your plaster, concrete, grout, etc. causing deterioration of these components.

The chlorine should also be maintained to keep the water clear and in balance.

Algae:

We have had a mild winter so we are already looking at having a larger than usual algae issue this year. If these pools are left untreated the algae will continue to bloom, even though the pool is covered there are many types of algae that have adapted to live in dark conditions. Algae like many plants, do not die, they go dormant waiting for ideal conditions to thrive. As the temperature of the water rises algae also thrives, this can lead to staining that may be very difficult if not nearly impossible to get rid of depending on the type of algae.

Bugs and Bacteria:

We all know that standing water is a breeding ground for many insects, especially mosquitos. We all know about the annoyance mosquitos bring as well as a long list of their own diseases. The other issue is bacteria in the pools. Bacteria in pools can form what is called biofilm. This is formed when bacteria embed and colonize in a layer of slime called biofilm. This slime protects the bacteria from sanitizers such as chlorine making it very difficult to eliminate. It is estimated that 65% of human bacterial infections in aquatic environments involve biofilms.

What we are recommending is going to save these pools from costly repairs and algae mitigation down the road. Let's not forget to protect our community's investments, and remain problem free for years to come. We are all in this together, let's work together and stay safe.

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