



COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE • COMMUNITY HEALTH AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN NO. 8-93-DES

DISTRICT ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DIVISION

SWIMMING LESSONS FOR BACKYARD POOLS

The Riverside County Department of Environmental Health recommends that the instructors conducting swimming lessons in a backyard swimming pool follow these guidelines to operate the pool in a safe manner. This Department does not routinely inspect backyard swimming pools, but we do respond to complaints. In addition to these recommendations you may want to check with your local Y.M.C.A. to see if they have any further recommendations or suggestions.

1. The instructor should have a current Red Cross advanced lifesaving certificate or Y.M.C.A. senior lifesaving certificate, or have equivalent qualifications and be trained to administer first aid, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
2. Safety equipment should be provided in an easily accessible poolside location. Safety equipment should include:
 - a. A body hook with attached 12 foot (min.) pole.
 - b. A life ring with enough attached rope to span the width of the pool from the edge of the pool.
 - c. Section off the deep end of the pool with a rope and buoys attached to the sides of the pool.
 - d. First aid supplies.
 - e. Post an artificial respiration sign with diagrams and a 911 emergency phone number sign.
 - f. A telephone should be readily available to use in case of an emergency.
3. A pool water test kit should be available and used on a daily basis. If swim classes are moderate to large in size, the pool's water may need to be tested more frequently. Check with your local pool supply store for information on using the test kit. Some of the more important water chemistry items you will test for are:
 - a. **Free Chlorine** - this is the chlorine that is not combined and is still available to disinfect infectious agents such as potentially pathogenic microorganisms, bacteria, viruses, and algae. You should have a free chlorine level of 1.5 ppm to 3.0 ppm ideally, and no higher than 10.0 ppm.
 - b. **Combined Chlorine** - this is the chlorine that has combined with dust, dirt, and other organic material. This chlorine is not readily available to disinfect pathogenic microorganisms. If there is a build-up of combined chlorine (also called chloramines) swimmers may complain of irritated eyes, and there may be a strong chlorine smell. To reduce the level of chloramines, more chlorine needs to be added to the pool.

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- c. pH - is the measure of the acidity or alkalinity of the pool water. You want to maintain your pool water's pH between 7.2 to 8.0. If the pH level is too low (i.e.: 6.0) some individuals may develop skin rashes.

Check with your local pool supply store for further information on adjusting your pool's water chemistry. Keeping pool water in proper chemical balance will avoid corrosion of pump/circulatory system and will preserve pool plaster from scaling or erosion.

*Document available in an alternate format upon request

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