

## **OPERATING A PUBLIC SWIMMING POOL IN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

The Pool Code contains excerpts from the California Health and Safety Code, the California Code of Regulations and the California Building Code. Public swimming pools shall operate in accordance with these codes as a matter of good business practice, protection of public health and legal obligation. The Pool Code can be found on the Marin EHS website.

### **ACCESS FOR INSPECTIONS:**

Unless management is **onsite all day**, property owners/property management companies/pool operators shall provide EHS with a key, key code, or the code to a lockbox containing a key on the property. Keys shall be provided to allow inspectors access to the pool, equipment area, restrooms, showers, and any other related areas. All keys will be stored in a locked cabinet within the EHS office, only accessible to EHS personnel. After the inspection, inspectors will bring the key back to EHS and immediately return keys to the locked cabinet. Key codes and lockbox codes will be written in the property's file.

Public pools, splash grounds, and spas must obtain a Permit to Operate from EHS. As part of this permit, one or more inspections are conducted every year. Inspections are unannounced and occur during regular hours of operation of the pool facility. Additional inspections to follow up on complaints or compliance issues may also occur. As these inspections are unannounced, and cannot be scheduled in advance, inspectors shall be provided access as described above, so they are able to easily access the pool/spa(s) and equipment area(s).

At any time that **locks are replaced**, key codes, or lockbox codes are changed, the property owner/property management company/pool operator shall provide a new key/code. Old keys will be sent back to the property owner/property management company upon request.

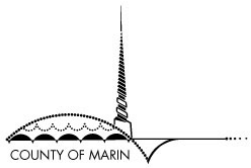
Failure to provide keys, key code, or lockbox code to EHS may result in cost recovery fees at the current hourly rate (for a minimum of 1 hr) and may result in suspension of the Permit to Operate (pool closure). Cost recoveries fees will cover any inspectors time spent on gaining compliance.

California Health and Safety Code gives local enforcement agencies (including EHS) the authority to at any reasonable time, enter all parts of the premises of a public swimming pool to make examination and investigation to determine the sanitary condition and compliance with other applicable codes.

Within equipment areas, equipment must be easily accessible for the purpose of an inspection without requiring the inspector to climb over or remove obstacles.

**INSPECTION REPORTS AND COMPLIANCE:** Public swimming pools, spas, and spray grounds in Marin County are inspected by Environmental Health Services (EHS). Inspection reports are issued to the owner or manager by mail, email, or in person. The reports document violations of State law and direct corrective actions. Often, the inspection report will indicate a **reinspection date**. On or after this date, the inspector will re-inspect the pool to verify compliance. If the violations are not corrected, the owner of the pool, as authorized by the Board of Supervisors, shall be charged for each subsequent reinspection required for EHS to achieve compliance. Further non-compliance may result in procedures to suspend or revoke the permit to operate a public swimming pool. Unsafe conditions, including incorrect pool chemistry, entrapment hazards, cloudy water, lack of safety equipment, gate that doesn't latch, equipment installed without approval, etc. will routinely result in immediate pool closure.

**REMODELING, EQUIPMENT CHANGES, AND NEW CONSTRUCTION:** Contact EHS **prior** to new construction, remodeling (including re-plastering and deck replacement), or any equipment changes (including



suction drain covers, pumps, motors and filters) for approval. Equipment shall meet NSF/ANSI Standards and is subject to review by EHS.

**STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAW REQUIREMENTS:**

- CHEMICALS:** The required levels for free residual chlorine (Cl) in a pool are **1.0-10 ppm**, or **2.0-10 ppm** when a cyanuric-acid stabilizer (CYA) is used. Spas, wading pools, and spray grounds require **3.0-10 ppm** at all times. The pH must be maintained between **pH 7.2 – 7.8**. The maximum level for cyanuric-acid stabilizer is **100 ppm**. *Chemical levels outside of these legal requirements often result in immediate pool closure, unless corrected immediately.*
- DAILY RECORDS** shall be maintained at each pool site. Daily records are required for all bodies of water, including sites with chemical controllers. Properties with less than twenty-five (25) units shall record chemistry at least twice per week. Information shall include disinfectant residual (free chlorine), pH, operation corrections, and maintenance procedures such as cleaning of filters, quantity of chemicals used, calibration of chemical control equipment, etc. Pool operators are required to record **accident events** involving fecal, blood and vomit contamination, as well as **drowning** and near-drowning incidents.
- VGB REQUIREMENTS:** All bodies of water, regardless of construction date, shall meet anti-entrapment (VGB) regulations. Anti-entrapment equipment, including covers and safety vacuum release systems (SVRS), must be compliant and operable. **VGB covers have an expiration date and MUST be replaced on or before this date (usually 5 years) to avoid closure.** EHS will remind owners when covers are due for replacement, but it is the owner’s responsibility to replace covers when they expire.
- ENCLOSURES** are meant to prevent access to small children and prevent accidental drownings. Enclosures cannot be easily climbable, have no climbable structures within 5’ of the enclosure, and shall not have any gaps that would allow passage of a 4-inch sphere. All gates to the pool area shall open outward and shall be **self-closing** and **self-latching**.
- RECIRCULATION & DISINFECTION EQUIPMENT** must be operating during all times a pool is open for use.
- CHLORINE TABLETS** placed in the skimmer or in a floating dispensing device are **NOT** allowed. Placing the wrong type of tablet into a dispenser may create mustard gas or explosions.
- AUTOMATIC POOL CLEANING EQUIPMENT** (such as pool sweeps) must be detached and removed during hours of operation.
- AMERICAN WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA)** compliance is enforced by the Justice Dept., local Bldg. Dept. and private parties in court. EHS recommends an ADA evaluation of your pool by a certified consultant or a trained architect.

This information has been provided to the owner/manager of the following public swimming pool:

Pool Name & Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_

Owner Name: \_\_\_\_\_ In person  By mail  email

R. E. H. S. \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_