



Hard to believe that it has been two months to-the-day since my last broadcast letter went out with the hopes that this would be ending by now and we would all be getting back to a 'normal' summer season. Unfortunately, it has not turned out that way, so I thought that it was time to follow up with some considerations for what will be long-term pool shutdown for most of you.

While still in the early stages right now, there seems to be a lot of consideration and effort going in to planning for those facilities that will be able to open again in the coming weeks. I am totally on board with offering assistance to those facilities, but I am concerned about facilities that will remain closed being somewhat 'forgotten'. Just because a facility is not able to open to the public in the short-term, that facility remains an important asset that ***will*** reopen at some point in the future, and so requires some maintenance considerations until that time.

In the mechanical room:

- If you have an automatic chemical controller the sensors (probes) will need to be kept wet while in storage. Even if they were put away for the winter, storing them for an extra 12 months means they may dry out. Check that they stay wet.
- Chemical feed tanks should be emptied and water should be pumped through the chemical feed pumps to flush out any chemical residue. Unplug and partially disassemble feed pumps if appropriate (remove tubes from peristaltic-type pumps)
- Motors do not like to sit for extended periods. Their internals will corrode, and bearings will settle. Give all pumps and motors a "bump" monthly – either by spinning them manually, or by very quickly switching the power on/off.
- Filters should be backwashed/cleaned then drained to keep stagnant water from sitting in the filters.
- Heaters and other accessory equipment should be drained as well

Chemical storage:

- As mentioned above, chemical feed tanks should be emptied. If possible, try to use up those chlorine and acid solutions in the pool.
- Chemicals, especially chlorine products and most liquids, do not store well long-term. If they will not be used up in the next six months or so then you will need to find alternative uses for them, or chance having to dispose of them as hazardous waste.
- Test kit reagents will be the same as most liquid products. If the bottle is still sealed then check the expiry date. If the bottle of reagent has been open and will not be used up within the next six months then it is no good to you, no matter what the expiry date.
- If you have any chlorine/liquid products or reagents that will not be used up in the next six months, consider donating them to another facility that has found a way to open. Those facilities will be struggling.

In the changerooms:

- toilets, sinks and shower drains need to be flushed occasionally to keep the traps primed, which will keep sewer gases from coming up.
- air circulation must be maintained – especially indoor facilities – to keep moisture to a minimum and keep mold from growing



The pool itself:

- Completely draining the pool may not be an option due to groundwater considerations (we are just getting to the end of flood season).
- Draining a pool is a safer alternative to covering the pool, unless you have a locking safety cover. Loose covers (winter covers and solar blankets) can easily blow off, be damaged by sun, and can even be a drowning hazard if someone/something falls into the pool.
- Even if you are able to completely drain the pool, rainwater will collect in outdoor pools
- Stagnant water will be a breeding ground for mosquitos, algae, and bacteria. Keep water stirred and add chlorine occasionally to prevent undesired organisms from breeding.
- Stagnant water is a safety hazard as it turns black/green/swampy, particularly for drowning. How would you ever know if there is a drowning victim in the bottom of the pool if you can't see the bottom? Not just people - animals as well.
- Drained pools are an attractive nuisance. Regularly check fences, gates, and doors to be sure that facility security is maintained.

Splashpads:

- The disinfection of the water should not be an issue, but there are a lot of frequently touched surfaces.
- Splashpads are a gathering place for children, much like playgrounds. It will be very difficult to keep children at an appropriate distance from each other, and difficult to keep parents from gathering/socializing while their children play.

General:

- Check with your insurance provider. Facilities that remain closed for an extended period may be considered 'abandoned' if you can not show that someone has been at the facility to perform weekly or monthly checks.
- Make an inventory list, including model and serial number, as well as potential replacement costs. If there were to be a fire, or some act of vandalism, are you able to show your insurer what you had for equipment?
- Birds, insects and rodents will be a problem if humans are not around regularly. Keep an eye out for animal damage throughout the facility, and keep up on pest control measures.

If budget allows, this "lost" season would be a good opportunity to repaint or regrout the pool surface. Maybe replace or rebuild that pump that has been problematic the last few pool seasons. Upgrade / update your disinfection equipment. Clear away those trees that are causing root damage to the pool deck. Take advantage of sunny days with no bathers. It is (hopefully) a rare circumstance!

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