Pool Safety Tips:
TO HELP LIMIT LIABILITY & LOSSES

Summer is prime pool time. With the new season upon us, now is a good time to prepare your pool and facility for maximum enjoyment and safety for all.

20%

pool injuries occur at public pools (including apartment buildings & condo complexes)

Source: poolsafely.gov

Along with sprucing up the hardscape, replacing the deck chairs, and painting the locker rooms, make sure that you adhere to and enforce safety codes and standards that can keep your pool and surrounding property a clean, safe place to swim all summer long.

The reasons are clear. Public pool and hot tub operators can be held responsible for incidents if it's found they failed to provide a safe environment for their guests.
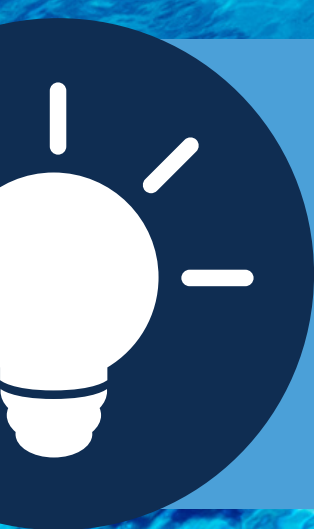
Here are just a few examples of potential loss-causing situations:

- If a guest is injured by broken glass or another sharp object left on the pool surround.

- If a swimmer gets sick from bacteria found in your pool water because it wasn't tested correctly.

- If someone suffers a concussion or other serious injury after diving from a faulty diving board.

- If a shortage of lifeguards (or personnel trained in CPR) leads to a delayed response in an emergency.

- If a wet floor in the locker room causes someone to slip and fall.

- If vandalism occurs after closing when someone is able to enter the pool area through an unlocked gate.

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TAKE PRECAUTIONS TO PREVENT DROWNINGS

- **Install a fence** to deter unsupervised entry into your swimming area and include a self-closing gate along with other security devices, such as locks, alarms, sensors, and pool covers

- **Check that gate locks work properly** so they're effective in restricting pool access.

- **Hire lifeguards** - one lifeguard for every 25 swimmers at your pool is a typical guideline.

- **Train your staff** about basic rescue procedures, including CPR.

- **Keep rescue devices and reaching poles near the pool** so bystanders can intervene quickly if a potential lifeguard is not on duty.

- **Prohibit diving**, if possible, as the risks are so severe.

- **Prohibit consumption of alcohol** as research shows it is factor in many water-related fatalities.

- **Create a list of safety rules** and strictly enforce them with visitors, guests, and members.

- **Keep emergency phone numbers near the pool**, so help can be called quickly.

KEY TIP:
Display life-saving information, like CPR instructions, drain shut-off valves, emergency plan, etc.

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KEEP POOL WATER CLEAN TO HELP PREVENT HEALTH OUTBREAKS

- Scrub pool surfaces, including decking, ledges, steps, handrails, etc.

- Test and service pool filter and other equipment to ensure they work properly to remove impurities and maintain water quality.

- Check for safety updates and policy changes with state and local health departments.

- Maintain optimal chemical and pH levels in pool, following recommended guidelines.

- Use a pool shock treatment regularly to kill harmful organisms.

- Keep organized and detailed records of disinfectant and maintenance activities.

- Drain and re-fill a percentage of the pool water at least once-a-month, or more often, depending on use.

- Clean pool areas, restrooms, showers, and diaper changing stations on a regular basis and as often as needed

- Enforce capacity limits

- Learn how to safely use/store pool chemicals.

KEY TIP:
If pool water fails testing at any time, close the pool and evacuate all members and guests until acceptable readings are re-established.

COMPLY WITH PUBLIC SAFETY & LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

- Ensure your pool meets public safety and access regulations.

- Make sure your pool complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and allows safe access for people with physical disabilities. For example, if you do not have a proper pool lift, you can be held liable for discrimination.

- Confirm your facility meets minimum standards for non-slip surface or flooring, particularly around pool, splash pad, or hot tub.

- Inspect pool drain safety systems to ensure they are in compliance with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (VGBA), a federal law that dictates specific requirements for pool drain covers and when they need to be replaced.

- Have a qualified electrician review underwater lights, pool equipment, outlets, switches, audio speakers, etc. to make sure they are all in compliance with the National Electrical Code (NEC). Schedule maintenance staff to routinely check electrical connections.
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- Ensure pool barriers and fencing around the pool meets current guidelines for preventing a child from getting over, under, or through it to enter pool area.

KEY TIP:
Pool rules and regulations can change over time and vary from location to location. So partner with local officials and stay up-to-date on the latest laws and ordinances in your area so you can respond quickly to changes.

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CLEARLY POST SIGNS

- Make sure signs meet safety standards for how large they should be and where you should hang them.

- Paint pool depth on the deck and side of pool where it can be easily read. Make sure the deep end of the pool is also clearly marked in feet.

- Adhere to recommended standards from the American National Standards Institute (ANSI)

- and the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) to ensure that your signs: 1) describe the pool hazard; 2) advise how to avoid it; 3) include recognizable hazard symbols; and 4) use appropriate risk-based words, such as danger, warning, or caution.

- Post rules around the pool and inside the facility to give guests and staff critical information about acceptable behaviors at your facility.

- Mark wet surfaces or freshly mopped floors with easy-to-see signs that notify guests of slippery spots and help avoid slip and fall accidents.

Pools offer a great way to have fun in the sun. But they also present significant potential for harm. For more information about how you can mitigate your risk, check out the resources listed below and consult with our advisors.

Pool Safety Resources for additional information:

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention
Pool and Hot Tub Alliance
Poolsafely.gov
Insurance Information Institute - Pool Safety and Insurance

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