

2024 News Splash

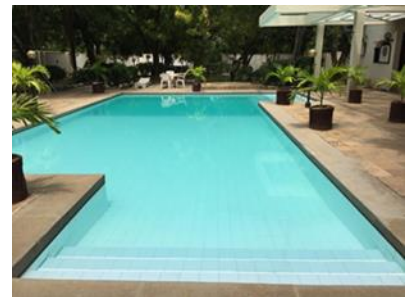
Happy Spring, from the Water Recreation Program at Public Health – Seattle & King County (PHSKC)! With summer around the corner, we're sending our annual newsletter to remind you of the operating requirements for your Water Recreation Facility (WRF). This list isn't exhaustive – you can find the full text of the state regulations, Washington Administrative Code Chapter 246-260, on the [state Legislature's website](#).

If you received this in the mail, visit www.kingcounty.gov/pools to view the newsletter on our website and access all the links.

Preparing your Water Recreation Facility (WRF) to open for the season

- **Enclosure Barriers:**

- Ensure barriers are in proper condition and can't be climbed. Drowning is a leading cause of injury and death for children. Pool safety requires proper barriers combined with constant supervision of children.
- All gates and doors leading into the pool/spa enclosure must be self-closing and latching. All latches must be at least 60" above the ground, or the gates/doors must require a key or code to enter. NOTE: Facilities with lifeguards have different requirements.
- For more detailed information, visit our [Pool/Spa Barrier Enclosure Requirements](#) webpage.



- **Pump Room Equipment:**

- Ensure all equipment in the pump room is operational. Consult operational manuals, manufacturers, and pool professionals for assistance.
- Your facility is required to use the automatic chlorine/bromine feeder. If there are chemical controllers, ensure interlocks are working properly with chemical feed equipment.
- Alteration/modification of a facility or equipment requires PHSKC plan review and approval. This includes changes to chemical feeders. Send questions regarding plan review to KCPoolPlans@kingcounty.gov. You are not required to go through plan review for routine maintenance or if you replace equipment with the exact same make/model.

- **Emergency Equipment and Lifeguard Requirements:**

- Manual emergency shut off switches and alarms must be operational. In facilities with an SVRS automatic emergency shut off switch (Stingl or Emotron) and alarm, the switch and alarm must be operational.
- Ensure emergency phones or call boxes are operational and are linked to the correct location or address.
- Ensure emergency equipment is in place and in good working order. This includes a double crook reach pole, life ring with rope, a standard 16-unit first aid kit, and emergency blanket.
- Lifeguarded facilities must have a rescue tube or rescue buoy at each lifeguard station and at least one backboard for each pool. Lifeguard certifications must be current, and copies must be present at the facility. You must conduct in-service trainings as required and maintain records of all for a minimum of 3 years.

- **Signs – User Rules:**

- Ensure pool/spa rule signs are posted. Sign requirements and templates are available on our [Pool/Sign Rule Sign Templates](#) webpage.

- **Notification requirement for facilities that do not have lifeguards:**
 - Hotels, motels, apartments, condominiums, fraternities, sororities, homeowner associations, mobile home parks, and other facilities where people reside must notify adults of supervision requirements for pool users under 18 years of age. Owners must notify the pool users on the conditions for use (pool/spa rules) before their first use of the facility and annually thereafter. For example, notifications can be provided with a copy of pool rules at the time of check in at a hotel/motel, or during lease or membership signing/renewal.
 - **The notification needs to inform the users:**
 - Children 12 years old or younger must be accompanied by a responsible adult that **remains at the pool or pool deck at all times and is actively supervising.**
 - 13- to 17-year-olds are required to have at least one other person present at the pool.
- **Main Drain and Suction Outlet Covers:**
 - Check and replace damaged, missing, or expired drain covers. Ensure you keep a copy of your Virginia Graeme Baker Act (VGBA) compliance documentation available on-site. When covers are replaced, the installer needs to report the updated/replaced drain covers on the PHSKC portal: [Drain Cover Update Instructions](#).
- **Water Quality and Testing:**
 - Pool/spa water must meet regulatory standards at all times when open. In 2023, 200 out of 237 pool/spa closures in King County were due to facilities not meeting water quality standards. By ensuring your facility meets these requirements when open, you can avoid a closure and associated reopening fees. Water quality standard tables are at the bottom of this newsletter. Water quality must be tested daily before the pool is opened. Most test kits require a water temperature of 60-90°F for valid results. Results must be recorded and kept for a minimum of 3 years. Log sheets can be downloaded from the [Department of Health's webpage](#).
 - Remember to check your test kit, as expired reagents must be replaced.
 - Water must be tested daily for free & total chlorine (or bromine) and pH. You must also measure spa water temperature daily. Total alkalinity must be tested for weekly, and if you use dichlor or trichlor chlorine disinfectant, or add cyanuric acid to the water - cyanuric acid levels weekly.
 - Close the facility for unsafe conditions, including when water quality does not meet standards. Make necessary adjustments, retest, and reopen once proper water chemistry standards are met and documented.
- **Other Resources:**
 - Public Health Seattle & King County Water Recreation Facility Resources: www.kingcounty.gov/pools
 - Washington Department of Health Water Recreation Facility Resources: [Water Recreation Safety | WA DOH](#)
 - The CDC provides information on body fluid and fecal contamination response: [Contamination Response](#)
 - Certified Pool Operator training may be beneficial for new operators. See course offerings at [CPO for Operators - Pool & Hot Tub Alliance](#)

Report all drownings, non-fatal drownings, serious injuries, and illness to the Health Department

Owners/managers/operators must report any drownings, non-fatal drownings, serious injuries, or illnesses at your facility to Public Health – Seattle & King County within 48 hours of the incident.

A serious injury means:

- someone has called for emergency aid (911);
- And/or the person needs immediate medical treatment at a clinic or emergency room;
- And/or the person is admitted to a hospital.

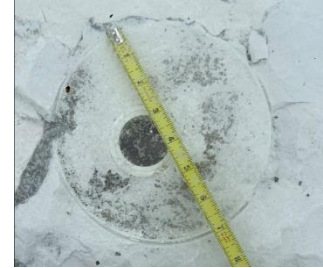
Download the [King County Injury Report Form](#) from our website.

Demolished Facilities

If your WRF was/is backfilled prior to June 1, 2024, the facility does not need to obtain a WRF operating permit. WRF that will be backfilled after June 1 will require an operating permit. Prior to backfilling a facility, remember to check with your local building department for any requirements they may have. The Manager/Owner/Operator must contact their Health & Environmental Investigator to schedule a site visit at the completion of the backfill to officially document that the WRF was backfilled. Please contact our office at 206-263-9566 to obtain the designated Health & Environmental Investigator’s name and phone number.

Replastering your Pool or Spa

If your WRF is being replastered, ensure the drain sumps **DO NOT** get filled up with plaster. Your sump depth and width are an important part of the design to ensure safe operation of the drains. Modifying the sump design without approval may cause your pool to be out of compliance with Federal VGBA regulations. If you have questions on plaster color requirements, or need to alter the sumps, please reach out to the PHSKC Plan Review team at KCPoolPlans@kingcounty.gov.



Close your facility if any of the following occur. This is to keep your guests safe and avoid a closure by Public Health and any associated reopening fees.

- If water clarity or water quality is outside the ranges listed in Tables 111.1 and 111.2, close the facility until water clarity and quality are restored to the acceptable range. (See specifics in the tables below.)
- If the covers on any submerged main drain or equalizer outlet are broken, missing, or not secure, close the facility until covers are properly installed.
- If the filtration or disinfectant equipment is not functioning, close the facility until the problem is corrected.
- If the recirculation pump or overflow system (skimmers or gutters) is not working, close the facility until the system is repaired.
- If a barrier gate or door at a non-lifeguarded pool facility is not properly self-closing and self-latching, the gate or door must be repaired immediately or locked until it is working properly.
- If lifeguards or attendants are not present at the facility when they are required, close the facility.

Water Quality Tables

For more info please see: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/WAC/default.aspx?cite=246-260-999>

Table 111.1
Minimum and Maximum Levels of Disinfectant (ppm)*
Constituents

Swimming Pool ***	Minimum	Maximum
Chlorine	1.5	10
Cyanurate Chlorine	2.0	10
Bromine	2.5	10
Spa & Wading Pool ***	Minimum	Maximum
Chlorine	3.0	10
Cyanurate Chlorine	3.5	10
Bromine	4.0	10

Table 111.2
Acceptable Ranges of Selected Chemical and Physical Water Quality

Chemical or Physical Constituent	Minimum	Maximum
pH	7.2	8.0
Cyanuric acid or its derivatives	0	90ppm
Temperature**	-	104°F
Combined chlorine	-	50% of free chlorine
Water clarity (safety)	Main drain and pool bottom visible at all times	
** A pool facility thermometer shall be provided when the water temperature exceeds 95 degrees Fahrenheit.		