



May 6, 2020

Riverside County
NEWS RELEASE

Contact:

Riverside County Joint Information Center
(951) 955-5087

Environmental Health issues guidance on shared pools in response to coronavirus

Riverside County health officials are issuing guidelines for the use and operation of community pools in response to the coronavirus epidemic.

The guidelines were developed by the Department of Environmental Health with input from Dr. Cameron Kaiser, Riverside County public health officer, and applies to pools and spas at apartment complexes and those operated by homeowners' associations.

"While we continue to stay in place, we want residents to benefit from as much safe activity outdoors as possible," said Board Chair V. Manuel Perez, Fourth District Supervisor. "These guidelines are a sensible way to do that with community swimming pools."

Health officials emphasized these are guidelines and not requirements for community pool operators.

- Six feet separation should be implemented, and swimmers should limit themselves to lanes.
- No large groups or pool parties. Residents of the same household may swim together.
- Lounge chairs and/or tables should be properly distanced. If they cannot be distanced, they should be secured and stored.

- Residents should wear a cloth face covering when traveling through common areas of the property where it may not be possible to maintain physical distancing, including to and from the pool, barbeque area and shared restrooms.
- Residents should bring hand sanitizer, or it should be provided by pool operator.
- Operators should frequently check shared restrooms to ensure they are stocked with hand soap and paper towels.
- Operators should use scheduled time slots on the busiest days.
- Operators should close the spa or limit use to 1 person or household at a time (post signage).
- Create a written disinfection plan that identifies frequently touched surfaces, a schedule, and designated person to complete disinfection tasks.
- Use an EPA-approved disinfectant on commonly touched surfaces, including but not limited to: gate, latch, tables, chairs, drinking fountain, pool handrails and countertops. In shared restrooms: door handles, light switches, faucets, latches and dispensers.
- Post signage reminding residents to wash their hands frequently with soap and water, cover coughs and sneezes, and to avoid the pool area if they are experiencing symptoms of illness including a fever of 100°F or above, sore throat, runny nose, chills, not feeling well, sneezing, coughing, abdominal pain or diarrhea

Safe water, sanitation and hygiene are essential to protecting human health during disease outbreaks. There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools and spas, however, maintaining good chlorine levels in our community pools may help to prevent its spread.

For more information regarding health and safety requirements for community pools and spas visit: <http://www.rivcoeh.org/OurServices/PoolSpasWaterFeatures>.

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