



Environmental Health Division • Public Information

County of Ventura • Resource Management Agency • <http://www.ventura.org/rma/envhealth>
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WHAT SHOULD I DO IN THE EVENT OF A FECAL ACCIDENT IN MY POOL?

The emergence of pathogenic organisms such as *E. coli* and *Cryptosporidium* and the association of these organisms with recent serious outbreaks of illness following fecal accidents in public swimming pools has resulted in the Ventura County Environmental Health Division's development of the following policy.

The Environmental Health Division advises that the following precautionary measures be taken by swimming pool owners and operators to minimize the risk of disease transmission to bathers.

IN THE EVENT OF A FECAL ACCIDENT IN A SWIMMING POOL, IMMEDIATELY INITIATE THE FOLLOWING PROCEDURES:

1. Close the swimming pool, and instruct all pool users to exit the area.
2. Manually remove as much feces as possible. Vacuum the remaining visible material and then thoroughly backwash the filtration system to remove the material. **NOTE: Backwash material must be discharged to the sewer. Any equipment contaminated while cleaning should be thoroughly disinfected.**
3. Disinfect the pool water by achieving a *CT value* of 9600. *The CT value* is the contact time value which equals the concentration of chlorine in parts per million multiplied by time in minutes. For example, a 10 parts per million chlorine concentration must be maintained in a pool for 16 hours (960 minutes) (10X960=9600). Do not exceed 20 parts per million chlorine concentration.
4. The chlorine concentration must be monitored hourly to ensure that the proper concentration is being maintained. Also, ensure that the pH is being maintained between 7.4 and 7.6.
5. Operate the recirculation equipment continuously throughout the timeframe.
6. If the swimming pool is a low volume pool such as a spa or wader, the water should be drained and all plaster surfaces and equipment disinfected

with a 20:1 solution of pool chlorine.

- 7. Before re-opening the swimming pool, ensure that a chlorine concentration of 1.5 to 3.0 parts per million and a pH of 7.2 to 8.0 is reached and maintained.**

NOTE: ADJUSTMENT OF WATER CHEMISTRY CAN RESULT IN DAMAGE TO YOUR SWIMMING POOL OR EQUIPMENT AND SHOULD ONLY BE PERFORMED BY AN EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONAL.

To further reduce the possibility of illness at public swimming pools, it is recommended that the following operational and maintenance procedures be incorporated into the pool rules or posted:

1. Encourage pool users to use the restroom before entering the pool and direct them to wash their hands with soap and warm water before entering the pool.
2. Direct pool users to shower before entering the pool.
3. Direct pool users not to use the pool if they are suffering from a gastrointestinal illness or have had diarrhea in the past 2 weeks.
4. Do not allow infants in cloth diapers or disposable diapers to use the pool. Require the use of rubber pants, swim diapers or special swimsuits designed for individuals who are incontinent.
5. Do not allow the changing of diapers at pool side or the rinsing of infants in the pool water.
6. Always maintain the proper pool water chemistry. Maintain the disinfectant residual at 1.5-3.0 parts per million free available chlorine and the pH at 7.4-7.6.
7. Close the swimming pool if mechanical malfunctions are encountered with the recirculation equipment or automatic disinfectant feeder.
8. When incidents of contamination occur, log all information documenting the actions taken to correct the situation.

Immediately report all fecal accidents or other complaints of illness related to pool usage to the Ventura County Environmental Health Division 805/654-2813, Monday through Friday, holidays excluded. During holidays, Saturday, or Sunday, fax your report to 805/654-2480.