

Re-opening of Public Swimming Pools in Texas

Governor Abbott's Executive Order

With Governor Abbot's Executive Order GA-21, beginning on May 8, 2020, swimming pools were allowed to reopen. However, "indoor swimming pools may operate at up to 25 percent of the total listed occupancy of the pool facility. Outdoor swimming pools may operate at up to 25 percent of normal operating limits as determined by the pool operator. Also, local public swimming pools may so operate only if permitted by the local government. People shall continue to avoid visiting interactive amusement venues, such as water parks and splash pads." Minimum Recommended Standard Health Protocols for Bodies of water, including swimming pools, which was revised on May 18, 2020 after Governor Abbott's press conference, can be found at <https://gov.texas.gov/organization/opentexas>

Occupancy Calculation Guide

NET Health and The City of Tyler Fire Marshal's Office have been in discussion about finding the best formula for calculating 25% occupancy for swimming pools during this time. Below is the formula for calculating the 25% occupancy for the pool and pool yard enclosure based on the Internal Building Code (IBC) and International Fire Code (IFC):

Pool: 50 square foot / person (gross) divided by 4 (or multiply by .25)
Decks: 15 square foot/ person (gross) divided by 4 (or multiply by .25)

Example 1: A facility has a 1,200 sq. ft pool and 2400 sq. ft pool deck area

Pool: $1,200 \text{ sq. ft} / 50 = 24 \times .25 = 6$ occupants in the pool
Pool Deck: $2400 \text{ sq. ft} / 15 = 160 \times .25 = 40$ occupants on the pool deck
Total occupancy allowed = 46 occupants

Example 2: A facility has a 650 sq. ft pool and 1750 sq. ft pool deck area

Pool: $650 \text{ sq. ft} / 50 = 13 / 4 = 3$ occupants in the pool
Pool Deck: $1750 \text{ sq. ft} / 15 = 117 / 4 = 29$ occupants on the pool deck
Total occupancy allowed = 32 occupants

** The calculation can be adjusted for percent increases in occupancy when updates are made by Governor Abbott as Texas moves into future phases of re-opening. As of May 18, 2020, there has been no change to the 25% occupancy for public swimming pools.

Additional recommended measures for pool facilities to implement:

Individuals should avoid being in a group larger than 10 individuals

Increase the cleaning and disinfecting frequencies of commonly touched surfaces, such as gate latches, pool deck equipment, tables, chairs, rails for the ladders and steps, etc.

Staff may need to be allocated enough time to do this extra cleaning, not just on weekdays but also on weekends.

A sign-in system to help facilities with swimming pools monitor pool occupancy and cleaning and disinfecting frequency.

Are You Ready?

Pool season is upon us!

Is your pool test kit up to date? Does it need to be replaced?

Where is that **log book**?

Did it disappear over the winter?

Log books are required by the Texas Administrative Pool Code for daily readings of pool disinfectant and pH readings and other pool chemistry parameters.

Signage. Are the required pool signs in place, and readable?

Safety equipment: Life pole (shepherd's crook) and ring buoy, do they need to be replaced?

Emergency phone must be able to dial 911 directly. Has it been checked?

Fences and gates around pool yard.

Do the gates self-close and latch?

Equipment. Pumps, filters, chemical feeders, piping, valves, electrical system – are repairs needed?

Take this time to prepare your pool facility to be enjoyed safely by the members of your community.

If you have any questions, please contact NET Health Environmental Health at 903-535-0037

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NORTHEAST TEXAS PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT