

STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH



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DRINKING WATER AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH BRANCH

EHS Circular Letter #2020-27

TO: Directors of Health
Chief Sanitarians

FROM: Lori J. Mathieu, Branch Chief 

DATE: May 19, 2020

SUBJECT: Start-Up of Outdoor Public Pools – COVID 19 Guidance

On March 19, 2020, the Department of Public Health (DPH), Recreation Program, issued [Circular Letter 2020-10](#) regarding public pools. This circular letter provides additional information regarding such pools.

As the outdoor swimming season approaches, the DPH, Recreation Program, recommends that:

1. Local health officials encourage owners of seasonal outdoor public pools to implement their normally-scheduled annual pool start-up procedure as they would any other year, unless the pool is drained and the pool owner does not yet want to fill it with water.
2. Public pools remain closed to the public at this time.

It is important to have owners of outdoor public pools implement their normally scheduled annual start-up procedure for the following reasons:

1. With warm weather approaching, the water in an outdoor public pool for which a start-up procedure has not been implemented will start to change and deteriorate. Stagnant, untreated water is the perfect breeding ground for bacteria and mosquitoes, which in turn can carry diseases such as the West Nile Virus.
2. Completing the start-up procedure on an outdoor public pool now will ease the burden on local health departments, who license, permit or register such outdoor public pools, and pool contractors, who start-up outdoor public pools, when owners may open public pools to the public.

Once the pool's start-up procedure is completed, the owner of the pool should continue running it 24/7. The owner should also ensure that the required minimum disinfection levels in the pool are maintained at all times.



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[The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) states that there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools and hot tubs. According to the CDC, proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (e.g., with chlorine and bromine) of pools and hot tubs should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19. The concern with COVID-19 is not the properly-operated public pool itself, but rather the use of a public pool as a common gathering place. Accordingly, DPH recommends that public pools not open to the public at this time.

During this public health emergency, DPH recommends that everyone adhere to federal and state guidance regarding COVID-19, including [The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#) “social distancing” guidance, Governor Ned Lamont’s [executive orders](#), and [DECD’s guidance](#) regarding “Stay Safe, Stay Home”.

Should you have any questions further questions, please feel free to contact the Recreation Program at (860) 509-7334.

c: Heather Aaron, MPH, LNHA, Deputy Commissioner
 Brian Toal, Acting Section Chief, Environmental Health Section