



Division of Food and Recreational Safety

Guidance for Pool Operators, Water Parks During COVID-19 Pandemic

If you are not already aware, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) wants to provide additional information on Gov. Tony Evers' [emergency order](#) issued on March 17 and how it affects you.

The order defines mass gatherings as “any planned or spontaneous public or private event or convening that will bring together or is likely to bring together 10 or more people in a single room or a single confined or enclosed space at the same time.” Because 10 or more people may potentially congregate in or around a public pool, and public pools are not exempt, **public pools and water attractions may not be used at this time.**

Allowing a pool to become non-circulating and without disinfectant can lead to biofilm formation or growth within the plumbing, as well as bacterial growth in the pool. The biofilm can provide a surface for bacteria and other pathogens, protecting them from the effects of chlorination. Harmful pathogens like cryptosporidium, viruses and bacteria could also survive, and bacteria populations may be able to grow. For these reasons, unless a pool is properly drained and closed down,

recirculation and disinfection are still required even though nobody is using the pool.

The emergency order remains in effect for the duration of the public health emergency declared in [Order No. 72](#), or until a superseding order is issued.

Helpful Resources on COVID-19

The [State of Wisconsin created a webpage](#) that offers resources from various agencies and answers to critical questions. Here are a few other resources from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) that might be helpful during this challenging time:

- [COVID-19 Information](#)
- [COVID-19 Facts: Why Social Distancing](#)
- [COVID-19 Facts: Protect Your Family](#)

Thank you for your role in keeping Wisconsinites safe and healthy by reducing the spread of COVID-19. If you have any questions, please send them to datcpdfsrec@wisconsin.gov.

