

Guidance for Temporary Pool and Spa Closures

Swimming pools or spas may be temporarily closed for a variety of reasons. Generally outdoor swimming pools and spas are seasonal and are closed and winterized every year. Both outdoor and indoor swimming pools and spas may be temporarily closed due to an equipment failure or where staff is not available to operate a pool or spa as required. The department or local inspection agency also may order a swimming pool or spa to close for a violation of the provisions of the Iowa Code or Iowa Swimming Pool and Spa rules. In 2020, under the unusual circumstances of a global pandemic the governor even issued a proclamation that temporarily required all swimming pools and spas to be closed as a mitigation strategy to reduce the transmission of SARS-CoV-2.

With the exception of winterization associated with seasonal closures, in most cases during temporary closures, it is safer and more cost effective to keep the swimming pool or spa equipment operating and water chemically balanced to prevent damage to the pool/equipment, and to prevent the growth of biofilm, mold, algae or pathogens.

Inspection agencies perform routine inspections of swimming pools and spas on at least an annual basis. If a swimming pool or spa is temporarily closed when the pool inspector arrives to perform an inspection, the inspection should be rescheduled if possible. However, if it has been a year or more since the last inspection, the pool inspector should complete the inspection, noting the deficiencies including those associated with the closure, and the facility should provide a corrective action plan including a time schedule for completion of the plan. Once the corrective action has been completed and the facility is prepared to reopen, the facility can be reinspected.

Temporary Closure Recommendations (excludes winterization):

- Restrict bather access to the closed swimming pool or spa with appropriate fences or barriers.
- Do not drain the pool; this can damage the pool plaster or can damage the pool structure particularly in areas of high water table.
- Keep the recirculation system in operation. If pumps are equipped with variable speed drives, the speed can be turned down, but it is important to keep circulating, filtering and disinfecting the water.
- Keep water balanced and chlorinated to prevent the formation of biofilm, mold and algae.
- Keep up on basic maintenance and repairs to prevent more expensive damage or issues.
- If the pool, piping, and equipment are located indoors, the pool water heaters can be turned off or the temperature setpoint lowered.

Please contact your local pool equipment supplier if you have questions on these recommendations or how to winterize your swimming pool or spa.