

Decoding the MAHC

The Model Aquatic Health Code

The MAHC is a free resource, based on science and best practices, to help state and local health professionals make swimming and other water activities healthier and safer.

300 million

Trips people in the U.S. make to pools and other swimming areas each year

People who swim can enjoy



Increased physical & mental health



Lower risk for chronic diseases, joint & muscle pain, death



Increased quality of life & decreased disability in older age

The Problem

But some places we swim aren't clean or safe.

1 in 8

Pools closed immediately on routine inspection for critical health and safety problems



Pool Closed



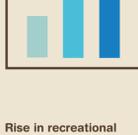
Problems can lead to

Drowning



- A leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages 1-14, second only to motor vehicle crashes

Outbreaks



- Rise in recreational water illness outbreaks: 12/year in early 1990s to 41/year in late 2000s—a single outbreak can sicken thousands

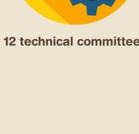
Chemical Injuries



- Almost 5,000 people visited the ER in 2012 for an injury from a pool chemical—almost half of visits were among kids

The Process

7 years



12 technical committees



140 people



Input and consensus from public health, aquatics, academia

2 rounds of public comment

4,407 comments

Received from partners, industry, public health, and interested public

3/4 of comments accepted

14 Topic Areas:



Preface, user guide, glossary



Contamination burden



Disinfection & water quality



Facility design & construction



Facility maintenance & operation



Hygiene facilities



Lifeguarding & bather supervision



Monitoring & testing



Operator training



Regulatory



Risk management & safety



Ventilation & air quality



Fecal/vomit/blood contamination response



Recirculation systems & filtration

The Product

Guidelines, based on science and best practices, on how to best design, construct, operate, and maintain public pools and other aquatic facilities



68% of local health departments regulate or inspect public swimming pools and facilities.

The MAHC is NOT a federal law. It's voluntary, model guidance to help reduce the burden on state and local pool programs that individually write their own codes.

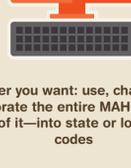
Use the MAHC



To update existing codes for public swimming pools and other aquatic facilities



To incorporate guidelines based on science and best practices into state and local aquatic programs



However you want: use, change, and incorporate the entire MAHC—or just pieces of it—into state or local health codes

The Public Health Impact

The MAHC can help:



Prevent drowning, illness, and injury



Raise minimum standards and reduce inspection violations



Keep pools open for more summer and year-round fun

Help make swimming healthier and safer.

