



NATIONAL SWIMMING POOL FOUNDATION[®]
Keeping Pools Safer. Keeping Pools Open.

June 4, 2018

Position Statement

“To encourage happier and healthier living by increasing aquatic activity through education and research,” the National Swimming Pool Foundation Board of Directors hereby ratifies this position statement based on the rationale described herein.

The National Swimming Pool Foundation (NSPF) Position:

State, territory, and local health departments; aquatic facilities; and the industry at large shall evaluate and adopt all or part of the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC), with the objective of protecting the future of aquatic facilities and their staff and patrons. In the event the MAHC does not contain suitable or applicable language, jurisdictional authorities and stakeholders shall submit requested changes, with supporting documentation, to the Council for the Model Aquatic Health Code (CMAHC) (www.cmahc.org) for technical review and potential incorporation during subsequent biennial updates. Implementation of the MAHC due process ensures protection of the public, more efficient facility operations, and maintenance of consistent guidelines pertaining to suppliers and manufacturers.

The Rationale:

1. During 2000–2014, public health officials from 46 U.S. states and Puerto Rico reported 493 outbreaks associated with treated recreational water, resulting in at least 27,219 cases and eight deathsⁱ
2. Annually in the U.S., approximately 200,000 individuals seek emergency care for injuries associated with swimming pools, and nearly 700 experience fatal drowningⁱⁱ
3. The U.S. documents more than 85 environmental health codes relative to the design, construction, and operation of public swimming poolsⁱⁱⁱ
4. CDC surveillance compiled pool and spa inspection data from five states, representing 15.7% of all U.S. public pools, revealing that 12.3% of routine inspections resulted in immediate closure because of at least one violation representing a serious public health threat^{iv}

Numerous jurisdictional environmental health departments and corresponding stakeholders engage annually to maintain and update local codes to impact these statistics. Conducted independent of one another, local code updates do not typically engage a national audience to benefit from the latest scientific evidence, best practices, leading experts, and consensus. As a result, no two swimming pool and spa environmental health codes are the same, and, worse, recreational water illness and drowning rates remain tragically high.

The current redundant system of updating, maintaining, administering, and enforcing local swimming pool and spa code represents waste of government resources, misuse of taxpayer dollars, and misguided efforts of the facilities, manufacturers, designers, builders, and suppliers engaged in updating and complying with inconsistent codes.

The apparent limitations of current pool and spa code processes prompted the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) development of a national public health and aquatics sector consortium. The output of this effort was creation of the MAHC, an up-to-date, consensus- and science-based model code protecting public health and supporting facilities, suppliers, and jurisdictional authorities. The MAHC is all-inclusive, addressing facility design, construction, and operation. In addition, the MAHC Annex documents the rationale for specific MAHC language. The CMAHC is a 501(c)(3) non-profit formed to administer MAHC updates by:

1. Processing MAHC change requests and advising the CDC on acceptance considerations
2. Advocating for improved health and safety conditions at aquatic facilities
3. Assisting health departments, boards of health, legislatures, the aquatics industry, and other partners, with usage, benefits, interpretation, and implementation of the MAHC
4. Soliciting, coordinating, and prioritizing MAHC-related research

About NSPF:

We believe everything we do helps people live happier and healthier lives. Whether it's encouraging more aquatic activity, making pools safer, or keeping pools open, we believe we make a difference. Founded in 1965 as a 501(c)(3) non-profit and located in Colorado Springs, Colorado, NSPF proceeds go to fund education, research, and to help create swimmers. NSPF's 180,000 members represent the industry, from public operations, to residential service, to pool building, designing, and engineering. The NSPF family of products, programs, and services is represented by the following core offerings:

- Certified Pool & Spa Operator[®] (CPO[®]) Certification reaches over 37,000 professionals annually, equipping industry representatives to keep pools safer and open
- GENESIS[®] University leads the industry in educating designers, engineers, and builders, culminating in the Society of Watershape Designers[®] Certification
- Step Into Swim[™] serves as a 10-year initiative to create one million more swimmers
- The Advanced Service Technician[™] training, and associated AST[®] Certification equips service companies and their technicians to expertly care for swimming pools and spas

Respectfully,

G. Bruce Dunn

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Chairman of the Board
National Swimming Pool Foundation

Thomas M. Lachocki

Thomas M. Lachocki, Ph.D.
Chief Executive Officer
National Swimming Pool Foundation

ⁱ Hlavsa, M. C. et al. 2018, Outbreaks Associated with Treated Recreational Water – U.S. 2000-2014; MMWR, May 17, 2018

ⁱⁱ CPSC. National Electronic Injury Surveillance System (NEISS). Washington, DC. Available at <https://www.cpsc.gov/cgibin/NEISSQuery/>. Wide-ranging online data for epidemiologic research (WONDER). Atlanta, GA: CDC, National Center for Health Statistics; 2016. Available at <http://wonder.cdc.gov>

ⁱⁱⁱ See <https://www.nspf.org/content/aquatic-codes> for links to the spectrum of health codes.

^{iv} Hlavsa, M.C. et al, 2016, Immediate Closures and Violations Identified During Routine Inspections of Public Aquatic Facilities – Network for Aquatic Facility Surveillance, Five States, 2013. MMWR, 65(5), May 20, 2016