



COVID-19

Advice for Aquatic Facilities (current on 26 March 2020)

This information is provided by the City of Perth for practical consideration, following the Department of Health guidance in regard to precautionary measures for reducing the risk of spread of COVID-19. The current advice is that all public aquatic facilities are to be closed until further notice.

Why should aquatic facilities be closed?

The rationale behind closing pools is to reduce the risk of spreading COVID-19 through social distancing measures and by preventing virus transfer from hand to mouth, relating to contaminated surfaces (handrails, buttons etc).

How should aquatic facilities be closed?

- Ensure appropriate signage is displayed at all entry points to the facility clearly stating closure.
- The facility is not to be accessible to anyone other than pool operators who will be required to maintain the water quality.

Do closed aquatic facilities need to be maintained?

Yes, all closed public aquatic facilities need to be maintained to a minimum standard, operators are to ensure:

- Water clarity is maintained and algal growth is prevented
- The facility does not give off objectionable odours
- The facility does not become a breeding ground for insects
- The facility does not create any other nuisance or safety hazards

Maintenance of other water quality parameters is not required during closure such as minimum pH, chlorine and bromine levels. This also means that the pool quality does not need to be tested

Should strata complex swimming pools be closed?

Although strata pools may not be open to the general public, the City's interpretation is that any residential strata building consisting of 30 dwelling units or more is classed as a public facility under the *Health (Aquatic Facilities) Regulations 2007*.

In line with the government messaging, and to support the principle of social distancing, it is the City's view that swimming pools and spas at strata buildings consisting of less than 30 dwelling units should be closed – even though they are not technically classified as 'public pools'.

When can aquatic facilities be opened?

Aquatic facilities can be opened once it is advised by the Department of Health that it is safe to do so. Prior to your facility being reopened for use, you must seek approval from City's Environmental Health team. Please keep in mind the following:

- Chemical water quality must be compliant so please ensure chlorine or bromine and pH levels are within appropriate ranges for the pool or spa.
- **Microbiological samples** will need to be taken and submitted to the laboratory for clearance before the aquatic facility can be reopened.
 - One sample will be taken to test bacteria
 - The second sample will be taken to test amoebae
- PathWest will confirm if results are satisfactory or unsatisfactory
 - If results are satisfactory the relevant people will be contacted to open the pool
 - If results are unsatisfactory the pool will need to be resampled and will not be opened until satisfactory results are confirmed.

Interpretation

Please note that the City provides this information to you in good faith. If you disagree with the information contained within this communication you may wish to seek further clarification from the Department of Health WA on 9222 4222.

Resources

The following websites relating to COVID-19 should be consulted regularly for most up to date information:

- https://ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/A_E/Coronavirus - <https://www.pm.gov.au/media/update-coronavirus-measures> (Includes advice on swimming pools gym current at 18/03/20)
- <https://healthywa.wa.gov.au/coronavirus>

A link to the Code of Practice can be found below:

- [*Code of Practice for the Design, Construction, Operation, Management & Maintenance of Aquatic Facilities*](#)

A link to the Health (Aquatic Facilities) Regulations 2007 can be found below:

- https://www.legislation.wa.gov.au/legislation/statutes.nsf/law_s39013.html