COVID-19 Aquatics Considerations for Planning

Balancing Risk and Reward

New Jersey Recreation and Park Association

Aquatics Section

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NEW JERSEY RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION • AQUATICS SECTION

COVID-19 AQUATICS CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING

THIS DOCUMENT WAS PREPARED AS A PLANNING TOOL FOR THOSE MEMBERS OF NJRPA, AND ON BEHALF OF AQUATICS PROFESSIONALS IN NEW JERSEY, AS A PLANNING TOOL WHILE WE AWAIT DIRECTION FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE. THIS DOCUMENT IS ALSO DESIGNED TO BE SHARED WITH YOUR KEY DECISION MAKERS AS YOU AWAIT DIRECTION FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH.

DURING THE COLLECTION OF THE CONSIDERATIONS FOR PLANNING AND BEST PRACTICES HIGHLIGHTED IN THIS DOCUMENT, MUCH OF THE WORK WAS BASED ON THE EARLIER GUIDANCE OF THE CENTERs FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION.
ON SATURDAY, MAY 9, 2020, THE CDC DID RELEASE "CONSIDERATIONS FOR PUBLIC POOLS, HOT TUBS AND WATER PLAYGROUNDS DURING COVID-19."

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/parks-rec/aquatic-venues.html

AS YOU REVIEW THE CDC CONSIDERATIONS, BE SURE TO DRILL DOWN INTO THE DOCUMENT TO THE SECTIONS ON "GATHERINGS," "DISINFECTION," "CLOTH FACE COVERINGS,"AND "HEALTHY SWIMMING," AMONG OTHERS, TO FULLY UNDERSTAND THE SCOPE OF THE RESPONSE TO MANAGING RISK DURING THIS PANDEMIC.
WE ALSO URGE YOU TO STAY AWARE OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF YOUR LIFEGUARD CERTIFYING AGENCY AS THEY FORMULATE BEST PRACTICES TO MINIMIZE RISK TO YOUR LIFEGUARDS AND SAFETY STAFF. OUR LIFEGUARDS ARE FIRST RESPONDERS!

THESE LONG-AWAITED CDC CONSIDERATIONS ARE NOT "PRESCRIPTIVE" IN NATURE AND ARE GENERALIZED DUE TO THE DIFFERENT CONDITIONS RELATED TO COVID-19 EXPERIENCED NATIONWIDE. CDC'S CONSIDERATIONS ARE PURLY THAT, CONSIDERATIONS. THEY ARE NOT LEGISLATIVE, BUT THEY ARE THE BEST ADVICE FOUND AT THIS TIME.

NEW JERSEY'S LICENSED RECREATIONAL BATHING SITES WILL BE RECEIVING DIRECTION FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH ON THE REQUIREMENTS TO BE SET FORTH BY AN EXECUTIVE ORDER. THAT INFORMAITON IS STILL PENDING AND NO DATES FOR RELEASE ARE AVAILABLE AT THIS TIME.

MAY 13, 2020

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NEW JERSEY RECREATION AND PARK ASSOCIATION • AQUATICS SECTION

COVID-19 Aquatics Considerations for Planning: Balancing Risk and Reward

INTRODUCTION

The New Jersey Recreation and Park Association (NJRPA) represents the major providers of aquatic opportunities for the residents of New Jersey and our visitors to the Garden State. We represent facilities including community pools, lakes, waterfronts, indoor pools, and therapy pools, as well as large municipal and commercial aquatic centers and waterparks.

NJRPA's Aquatic Section has been working closely with the New Jersey Department of Health's Division of Consumer, Environmental, and Occupational Health on issues to be considered by the Division and for consideration by Governor Murphy as he pursues his six principles for New Jersey's Road Back: Restoring Economic Health through Public Health.

As leisure services professionals, we recognize and celebrate the value of aquatics in the lives of our residents, members, and guests. We truly understand the emotional attachment that our residents feel for our public pools, lakes, and beaches. Besides the obvious benefits of aquatics, such as fitness, drowning prevention, competition, and fun, we know that aquatic facilities foster a sense of community during the summer months. Our indoor facilities provide year-round enjoyment, relaxation, and fitness opportunities. Our commercial and municipal waterpark operators provide great family experiences while serving the state's residents, guests, and visitors. Our facilities provide employment opportunities and foster careers in our profession as well as future leaders.

We recognize that our facilities, IF opened this summer, will not resemble our facilities in past seasons. We share Governor Murphy's new mantra that "public health creates economic health," but <u>the decision to open public bathing facilities must be one based solely on the safety of our employees, members, guests, and visitors.</u>

The decision whether to open a public bathing facility should be based on science and safety, first and foremost. We also ask that the direction from the State

Department of Health be made as soon as possible as we need on average 4-6 weeks to complete our hiring, training, and COVID-19 operations planning reflective of the recommendations of the CDC, Lifeguard Certifying Agencies, the Model Aquatic Health Code, and ultimately direction from DOH and the Governor's Office.

There are also serious financial considerations that must be made by each sponsoring agency as some are operated as utilities while others are fully or partially government funded. Our commercial members also need to evaluate the economics of a shortened season with anticipated reduced bather and in-park capacities.

These days, there have been many comparisons between the openings of various businesses and services. These comparisons are not always equal. Whereas golf courses can meet the new demands for health and safety per COVID-19, swimming pools by nature are a more intimate, up close, and personal activity. Children are especially excited when they arrive at our facilities. Even in the best of circumstances, we find ourselves repeating safety rules and often have difficulty with compliance. Aquatic Managers want to return to providing these great services but ONLY if it makes health, safety, and financial sense.

PREPARING FOR SUMMER 2020 – DEALING WITH COVID-19

While the residents of New Jersey work to flatten the curve of this virus, we have looked to the Centers for Disease Control recommendations as well as the guidelines of President Trump's Opening Up America Again and the Model Aquatic Health Code. We have consulted with the major lifeguarding certifying agencies recognized in New Jersey along with the National Recreation and Park Association, the World Waterpark Association, and the National Drowning Prevention Association to name a few.

Our membership has been formulating tentative plans within the Three Phase Opening of America's Gating Criteria.

Phase I:

- Downward trajectory of influenza-like illnesses reported in a 14-day period.
- Downward trajectory of COVID like syndromic cases within a 14-day period.
- Downward trajectory of documented cases in a 14-day period OR downward trajectory of positive tests as a percent of total tests within a 14-day period. (flat or increasing volume of tests)

Phase II:

- No evidence of rebound and satisfy the gating criteria a second time.

Phase III:

- No evidence of rebound and satisfy the gating criteria a third time

Each Phase once initiated would represent a two-week period in between each successful Phase. This accounts for our need for 4-6 weeks of preparation once given the "green light."

The following activities that relate to parks, recreation, and leisure activities by Phase for planning purposes has been:

Phase I: Social settings of more than 10 people should be avoided where appropriate distancing may not be practical. Schools and organized youth activities closed. Gyms with social distancing and sanitization protocols.

Phase II: All individuals when in public should maximize physical distancing from others. Social settings of more than 50 people should be avoided. Schools and organized youth activities can reopen. Large venues can operate with moderate physical distancing protocols.

Phase III: Large venues can operate under limited protocols.

Governor Murphy's Road Back

Governor Murphy unveiled his "Road Back" on April 27, 2020, that included six principles that are intended to keep New Jersey on the road back, using renewed public health to create renewed economic health.

1. Following trends of sustained reductions in new COVID-19 cases and other key metrics reflecting a decreasing burden of disease.
2. Expanding testing capacity and speeding-up the return of results.
3. Robust contact tracing.
4. Ensuring safe places where those positively diagnosed in the future can isolate.
5. Responsibly restarting our economy to restore our economic health.
6. Ensuring our resiliency.

New Jersey is second only to New York in the number of positive cases and deaths due to the Coronavirus. Our road back for public bathing facilities is still in question and perhaps under a longer timeline than that proposed by the Opening Up America Again Three Phase Plan. However, we offer these principles and considerations for review and comment from the Department of Health as we plan together for a return to aquatics. You are also welcomed to use this as a planning tool and for reporting to your Mayors, Administrators, Commissioners, Boards, and Owners.

As community transmission rates decline in New Jersey and as we learn more about COVID-19, these major operational changes should be considered for relaxing or adjusting as the science warrants and with guidance from each local health authority based on transmissions, etc.

Facilities should start the season with the highest level of controls and as familiarity grows with the general public, there could be a softening of these requirements once the facility becomes practiced at compliance.

Disclaimer: This document is for consideration and planning purposes only. This represents "best practices" and recommendations from lifeguard certifying agencies and experiences around the country and abroad. Consider it a research document until we receive an Executive Order with compliance requirements from the State of New Jersey. (NJRPA Aquatics Section Education Sub-Committee)

GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Employees

- Upon arrival to work, all employees must wear employer issued masks per NJ Executive Order No. 122. Plastic splash guards do not replace the need for masks. Employees who are required to wear gloves are to be trained on the proper way to safely remove gloves.
- For minor employees, an information sheet detailing the employee's responsibilities under COVID-19 conditions should have parental approval, in addition to the Hepatitis B sign-off already required.
- Acrylic or plexiglass barriers/screens should be used to maintain physical distancing at admissions desk to reduce contact and eliminate the need for gloves. Clean these barriers frequently throughout the day with disinfectant.
- Should bag checks be done at your facility, have the guest open the bag and minimize risk. Wooden dowels can be used for inspecting bags, but must be cleaned and sanitized regularly. Employee should wear gloves.
- Proper disposal containers should be placed in staff and guest areas to avoid masks and gloves left on decks and in pools.
- Increase staff training on exposure and avoidance of COVID-19 exposure.
- Employees should be clean shaven in order to have the protective masks to fit properly.
- Employees should wash hands or use hand sanitizer after touching a surface or coming in physical contact with a guest or co-worker.
- Place sanitizing stations in all employee areas.
- Employee temperatures are to be taken upon arrival for work in the Manager's Office or First Aid Room with a no-touch thermometer. Any employee displaying a temperature of over 100.4° F will not be allowed to work and is to be sent home and recommended for proper medical care. Those taking the temperatures must wear gloves and masks.
- EEOC has provided a green light for employers to take the temperatures of their employees (and others) who enter their workplaces, and to make inquiries about whether an individual is suffering any COVID-19 related symptoms. (www.eeoc.gov)

- Any employee who is sick or is showing signs of the virus is to be directed to stay home and notify a Manager so proper protocol for the control of the virus or required need for contact tracking.
- Should multiple members of the staff become ill, guidance from the local Health Officer should be notified for direction.
- Staff meetings, trainings, and assignments should be done with physical distancing rules in place, maintaining a minimum of 6' apart whenever possible. Large staff meetings are directed to be run in smaller groups.
- Mannequins should be used and sanitized after each use.
- Virtual learning, in service, and employee onboarding is recommended.
- COVID-19 signage utilized in all employee areas to remind all of proper hygiene, use of PPE, and physical distancing requirements.
- Provide alternate areas for staff lounges or rest areas for breaks that meet physical distancing recommendations.
- Lifeguards are recognized by OSHA/POSHA as Front-Line Employees and must be provided with the proper PPE. Masks must be worn on the lifeguard chair, on roaming lifeguards, and at all times on deck and on the property. Masks may be removed for assists and rescues, with rear approach recommended.
- Follow the recommended protocols from your lifeguard certifying agency for CPR and rescue to minimize risk to lifeguards and guests. These continue to be adjusted based on any new health and safety findings.
- Lifeguard rotations should be reduced in length due to the use of masks.
- Lifeguards must not wear gloves in the pools.
- Lifeguards and Managers should be provided their own personal rescue mask, fanny pack, personal sanitizer, gloves, and rescue tube. Masks must be equipped with filters. BVMs with filters are also recommended.
- Rescue tubes must be used by the same lifeguard during their shift and sanitized before the next use.
- Maintenance and Janitorial Personnel must also wear a mask and, in appropriate functions, gloves.
- Staff administering basic First Aid must be provided with appropriate PPE.
- First Aid Protocols should be adjusted to address how to manage a guest or employee who exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while at the facility.

- Meet with local Emergency Management Director to review the protocol for requesting emergency assistance including language when calling 911, entry and exit points for response, crowd control recommendations to reduce risk to guests.
- Assign only one person per point of sale. Terminals, phones, scanners, and credit card machines should be sanitized between each user/shift.
- Reduce cash transactions when possible. Sanitize hands frequently.
- Clean and sanitize cash bags and all admissions drawers, counters etc.

++ If the safety of our staff and guests is paramount to us, the new normal will likely involve proof of immunity and/or vaccination per individual, such as we request a sign-off currently for Hepatitis B vaccination for our employees who are likely to come into contact with bodily fluids. A vaccine is not in the immediate future, so we must plan for the best possible practices. (This is developing)

++ Should restrooms and showers not allow for social distancing and are closed, the pools cannot be opened per DOH.

GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Guests

- Reduce your bather and in-park capacity of your facility by 50- 75% to achieve physical distancing on decks, grassy areas, snack bar areas, and picnic areas. Keep in mind that should you evacuate your pools for a "Code Brown" or a weather emergency you must still maintain your physical distancing. *(Formulas for calculations can be found as an addendum to this document.) (Other states have been required to open at 25% of capacity until guidance from DOH.) (Recommendations will be different per facility as it relates to water and deck spaces. Guidance has been between a low of 36 sf per person to a high of 100 sf per person to allow for families.)*
- Consider reducing hours of operation to allow for cleaning and sanitizing while no guests are on the property.
- To reduce capacity and risk, consider residents-only or members-only.

- Consider daily-only passes due to the uncertainty of opening and closing dates. There is also a risk of possible closing mid-season due to a localized outbreak.
- Those facilities with NJ Green Acres requirements are urged to apply for a waiver for 2020 to be able to eliminate guests and/or out-of-state guests.
- Consider a waiver form signed by members and guests who purchase a pass, so they are aware of the restrictions. When registering online, have this disclaimer as a sign-off so there is an understanding of limited operations and personal responsibility per COVID-19.
- Reduced capacity in restrooms is also required. Capacity must be established to allow for physical distancing. Sanitize throughout the day and document sanitizing schedule.
- Consider the use of an Attendant to monitor restrooms for physical distancing, cleaning, and disinfection.
- Consider periodic closings for cleaning and disinfection.
- Provide warning signs citing CDC recommendations regarding those people over 65 years of age and those with underlying health conditions not under control, should keep their distance from others or not attend.
- Provide sanitizer at admissions desk for guests upon entering.
- Lines for admissions must not "snake" or "switch back" eliminating physical distancing.
- Temperatures of all guests taken at Admissions by a Lifeguard or Manager wearing gloves and mask. **(TBD)**
- Require masks be worn by all guests while on deck or waiting for slides, diving boards, or snack areas. Masks must <u>not</u> be worn in the water. Provide masks for those that do not have them. **(TBD)**
- If utilizing wristbands, consider those that can be put on while maintaining physical distancing OR allow people to put on wristbands by themselves.
- Consider your refund policy as when guests enter the facility, they may choose to not remain as they do not have confidence in your ability to protect them OR they do not agree with your policies and procedures for COVID-19 conditions.
- If Admissions area is both entrance and exit, create a way to enter and exit without passing others or losing physical distancing.

- Social distancing must be maintained in the water. Families who have quarantined together can congregate. Others must practice physical distancing.
- Provide sanitizer at stations throughout the facility, including changing rooms, restrooms, snack bar areas, and all sitting areas.
- Communicate your requirements of health and safety due to COVID-19 at admissions area, and throughout the facility and restrooms, in English and a second language if applicable at your location.
- Eliminate chairs and lounges to achieve physical distancing and reduce the need for sanitizing following uses. Consider having guests bring their own chairs/blankets. Families that have quarantined together may sit together, but others must maintain distancing.
- Clean and sanitize umbrella poles and tables on the deck unless you remove them to minimize exposure.
- Lifeguard chairs should be sanitized throughout the day, ideally between rotations. Provide sanitizing wipes at each lifeguard stand.
- Consider use of floor decals, paint, or non-skid tape to mark out physical distancing on decks, queue lines, and slide towers.
- Should guests be required to wear masks, they should be worn on the slide towers and removed and held in their hands on slides.
- Audio announcements should be made throughout the day to educate and remind guests of social distancing and other health and hygiene requirements.
- Handrails, gates, ladders, and gate mechanisms should be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day.
- If lockers are provided, they must be cleaned and sanitized throughout the day. Wipes can be provided for guests to sanitize prior to use. Eliminate lockers that are counter to physical distancing or create a queue line for the locker area.

GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Attractions

SLIDES/DIVING BOARDS/LAZY RIVERS/PLAY STRUCTURES/LIFE JACKETS

- Should Lifeguards be required to wear gloves (TBD), gloves must only be worn when on dry deck, towers, or tube launch areas. Masks are to be removed prior to water rescue only.
- Guests must have masks on the slide/diving board steps/tower. No masks on guests while diving or during sliding.
- Consider periodic closure of slides/diving boards to allow for cleaning and sanitizing. Consider eliminating these activities should it be difficult to maintain physical distancing.
- Proper physical distancing on all queue lines is to be maintained by and supervised by assigned staff NOT lifeguards.
- Consider step decals, paint, or tape on towers and on queue lines for diving boards. All in one direction. No “snaking’ or “switch back” on queue lines.
- Lifeguards should attempt to minimize contact assisting guests in loading tubes on slides or lazy rivers. Place groups at proper intervals to encourage physical distancing. Although chlorine levels are known to break the virus, lazy rivers facilitate guests to float on top of the water and could cause exposure.
- Life jackets should be sanitized after each use. Consider having a bin to allow guests to place used jackets. Clean and sanitize them each night, with disinfectant and air dry. Kickboards, noodles not provided. BYO
- The CDC advises park users to continue NOT to use splash pads, water playgrounds, or water park features and other frequently touched equipment. NRPA believes that splash pads, water playgrounds, and other water park features should remain closed until there is no widespread community transmission. (CDC - April 10, 2020). When they are recommended for use, take care in creating a reduced capacity and a system that can create physical distancing such as one way in and one way out. This also includes traditional playgrounds until there is no widespread community transmission.

++ No changes are needed from current water quality practices as required by NJ DOH. WHO guidelines say 0.5 ppm chlorination is sufficient to kill the virus within 30 minutes. Most facilities operate with a range of 1 to 5 ppm with a proper pH so the virus can be broken down even easier than an e-coli issue.

Surfaces that are covered in treated water on a continuous basis do not require additional sanitization.

++ There are studies that have recently been released, but with some controversy, that UV light and humidity during the summer months can defeat the virus on hard surfaces. This is still being investigated and should not be assumed to reduce risk. Cleaning, sanitization, and physical distancing are still recommended. Eliminate risk, eliminate or reduce surfaces for operations, savings, health, and safety.

++ Per Tim Auerhahn of The Aquatic Council (www.aquaticcouncil.com), should you be considering not cleaning, sanitizing, and preparing your pools for this summer due to COVID-19: "Without proper pool and hot tub maintenance (which includes circulation and treatment of water), various pathogens can grow, such as Pseudomonas, Cryptosporidium, E. Coli, Shigella, etc. It can also create a breeding ground for mosquitos and other pests and the diseases of West Nile Virus and Zika Virus) they may carry, which presents a risk not only to bathers but to the entire community at large." "Critically important that active in-ground pool projects be completed. Unfinished projects pose a significant public safety risk as potential for cave-ins and pool popping, as well as construction risks." "Unfinished projects or dormant pools also become a safety risk if closed during the hot summer months whether covered or uncovered. There is a potential for increased trespassing and drowning risk."

GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Food Service/Snack Bars

- Plexiglass installed at cashier and service counters.
- Condiments should be in packets.

- Napkin dispensers are appropriate if single use, limited touches. Pre-wrapped utensils.
- Use floor decals, paint, or non-skid tape to show physical distancing.
- Sanitize all registers and credit card scanners throughout the day.
- Sanitize counters and tables, chairs, and highchairs throughout the day.
- Provide sanitizer wipes for guests to sanitize high chairs.
- Use cardboard trays and baskets.
- Arrange tables and chairs to allow for physical distancing. Mark out areas for tables to remain for physical distancing.

GENERAL HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Events & Programs

- Only consider programs that can allow for physical distancing of the instructor from the participants.
- Consider not using Wibits and similar flotation attractions that encourage contact and gathering.
- If kickboards, paddleboards, or yoga boards are used, physical distancing and sanitizing requirements must apply.
- Swim instruction that can provide physical distancing and a safe teaching environment for the instructor and participant is encouraged, as drowning prevention and aquatic fitness are cornerstones of our profession.
- Avoid events that would cause a gathering of more than 10 people in groups.
- Eliminate special events for 2020 or until further guidance on large crowds per CDC guidelines.
- USA Swimming has provided guidance on how to have physical distancing in lap swimming and training. They have also provided guidance on competitive swim team practices and meets utilizing physical distancing. But, since swim teams also create groups larger than 10, these should be eliminated for 2020.
- Lap swimming should be limited to one person per lane for a scheduled amount of time. There can be no sharing of lanes.

Communications

- Communications on three levels have never been more vital:
  - Staff
  - Public
  - Elected Officials/Owners/Boards & Commissions
- Signage and Announcements
- Physical distancing markings and rules consistent throughout the facility
- Deck Managers or Deck Ambassadors assisting guests with understanding their personal responsibility and helping to create a safe environment that will encourage participation. If your members don't have confidence that they can be safe, they will not come or stay.
- Be sure to communicate that this summer will be unlike any other, and attractions, services, and programs may be greatly affected.

++ The decision whether to open a public aquatic facility once the NJ Governor's Office approves, should be based on science and safety. Be prepared for decision makers to react to safety concerns, revenue projections, and emotions. Be prepared with the answers to all three.

++ Know your hourly, daily, and seasonal operating costs. Factor in additional costs for supplies and increased staffing needs due to COVID-19. With a possible delayed start to the season and fall school openings not yet determined, the ultimate decision for operations may lie in finances alone.

++ Remember the original mission of public swimming is to provide an opportunity to cool off in the summer months, exercise, and recreate year-round indoors, learn to swim, exercise, and socialize creating a sense of community. You may only be able to provide the very basics this year. Be sure to communicate that to your potential members and guests.

Addendum:

- How to Take Your Oral Temperature – NJ Department of Health
- Suggestions for Social Distancing at Pools – Brandstetter Carroll Inc.
- Calculating Capacities – Jeff Ellis & Associates

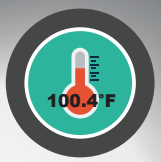
How to Take Your Oral Temperature

TAKE TEMPERATURE

1. Place the tip of a clean thermometer under your tongue.
2. Wait about one minute. Some thermometers beep when done.
3. Record your temperature.
4. Clean your thermometer.

WAIT

At least 15 minutes after eating or drinking before taking your temperature.

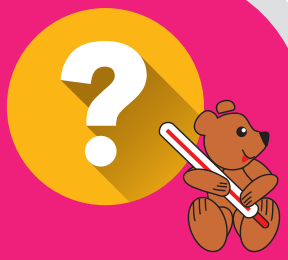


CALL DOCTOR

Call your doctor if you have a temperature of 100.4°F (38°C) or higher. You may need medical care.

CLEAN THERMOMETER

Clean your thermometer before and after you use it with either rubbing alcohol or lukewarm soapy water, then rinse with cool water. Wipe it dry with a clean cloth or let it air dry.



ASK DOCTOR

Ask your doctor how to take temperatures of those under 5 years of age.

NJ Health
New Jersey Department of Health

C2248

Suggestions for Social Distancing at Pools

New Jersey recognizes the International Building Code (IBC) to determine capacity at pools. The guidelines include 50 square foot per person of water surface and 15 square foot per person on the paved portion of pool decks. You must deduct a 6' wide area at the edge of the water and any pedestrian or lifeguard traffic corridors from the area you include in the square footage for capacity, so it will be different for every facility. This does not account for grass beach area.

You should figure the capacity as if there was a break time or pool emergency when all patrons are out of the pool, so disregard the water surface area in this suggestion. We would suggest you map out the areas where patrons will layout towels or sit on the grass or deck and then determine the square feet. We estimate a figure of 100 square foot (10' by 10') per person will allow for adequate social distancing.

In restrooms there are options. One is to provide signage encouraging social distancing and the other is to actually block every other urinal and lavatory/sink to limit use. Water closets and shower stalls should be fine as long as there are partitions or walls between fixtures.

Prepared by Patrick Hoagland and Charlie Schneider
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BRANDSTETTER CARROLL INC
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CALCULATING CAPACITIES- Prepared by Ellis & Associates

1. Identify realistic capacities for attractions based on queue line length, and throughput capacity, adjusted to allow for 6 ft/2 meters of physical distancing. This calculates to roughly 36 square feet per person (3.35 square meters/per person). It's important to confirm these guidelines with your local health officials. (Note: In some countries physical distancing guidelines from government health agencies may be altered to 3ft/1 meter or 4.5 ft/1.5 meters if all parties are wearing face mask. In those cases, you will want to adjust your calculations accordingly.)
2. When considering physical distancing, we know many guests visit with family members living in the same household. If that's the case, those family members can be closer to each other. Just be sure each individual or party from another household are separated by the physical distancing requirement. It's important to assess this "family" dynamic for your attraction as it may allow you to increase your physical distancing capacity.
    3. Identify realistic capacities for common areas. Keep in mind that limiting attraction queue and attraction capacity, may increase the number of people in common areas. Do not include spaces that cannot be accessed in your common areas (i.e. water fountains, landscaped areas, etc.) Only evaluate guest-accessible areas.
    4. Combining items 1 and 3, you can estimate your guest areas that can be used to measure and estimate capacity. Be careful to not include attraction queues or capacities for close attractions.
    5. It's better to be conservative on your initial estimates, monitor guest flow, resolve problem areas, and adjust your plan frequently. As health conditions improve, you may be able to gradually increase your capacities. Be sure to include your local health authorities in those decisions to ensure alignment.
6. To calculate capacities, divide your total square footage by the number of square feet required per person. For example, if you have 500,000 square feet of guest-accessible space and your region is requiring 6 feet as the recommended physical distance between people (which therefor requires 36 square feet per person), divide 500,000 by 36 and your capacity would be 13,888. A few notes: this calculation assumes each individual must have 36 square feet. If family members living in the same household are visiting the park together, you can have more than one person in 36 square feet. Just make sure there's at least six feet of separation between parties.

Resources for Assistance in Planning and Implementation for Aquatic Facilities

www.covid19.nj.gov
www.whitehouse.gov/openingamerica
https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html
www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water
www.njrpa.org
www.phta.org
www.starguardelite.com
www.redcross.org
www.jellis.com
www.eeoc.gov
www.poolmanagement.com
www.aquaticpros.org
www.waterparks.org
www.usaswimming.org
www.nrpa.org
www.iaapa.org
www.ndpa.org
www.poolsafely.org
www.alive-solutions.com

Facebook Sites of Value

NJRPA
Lifeguard Authority
NRPA Aquatics
North Texas Public Pool Association
AOAP
Lakeview Aquatic Consultants - Pool Aide
Aquatic Directors and Managers

(May 13, 2020)