



For Release March 24, 2020

## COVID-19 and Public / Semi-public Swimming Pool Closures

Governor Holcomb has issued Executive Order 20-08 requiring all individuals living within Indiana to stay home from 11:59PM today, 3/24/2020 through 11:59PM April 6<sup>th</sup> in order to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

This order may be extended or modified to remain in effect beyond April 6<sup>th</sup>. There are limited exclusions for individuals conducting essential services. A copy of this and other relevant Executive Orders are available at <https://www.in.gov/gov/2384.htm>.

All public and semi-public pools, spas, interactive fountains, other aquatic venues, and their associated aquatic facilities **must be closed for use** under Executive Order 20-08. These closures should remain in effect throughout the duration of time the order is in effect, including any future extension/s of the order. Operators should continue to maintain pools and spas in compliance with Indiana State Department of Health and/or Local Health Department minimum standards to prevent degradation of engineered systems which may cause a public health hazard.

Although the water in properly maintained aquatic venues does not pose an undue risk of COVID-19 transmission, the associated facilities, enclosures, deck areas, sanitary facilities, etc., provide a multitude of opportunities to congregate and transmit the disease, on par with gyms, spas, and public playgrounds. Aquatic venues are a non-essential amenity and restrictions should be implemented to eliminate the pathogen transmission.

Therapy pools or engineered water devices utilized under the direction of healthcare personnel for the purpose of providing therapy/healthcare to patients may remain open for the limited purposes of providing necessary medical services.

While aquatic venues are closed for use, it is an essential business operation to maintain water chemistry and water circulation throughout the closure period. Failure to do so could result in the long-term establishment of biofilm and associated potential human pathogens. Such pathogens include, but are not limited to, legionella pneumophila and pseudomonas aeruginosa bacteria. Maintenance personnel may still access aquatic venues in order to conduct these critical maintenance activities.

Weekly bacteriological testing can be performed, but should not be mandated during the closure period. *The expectations of 410 IAC 6-2.1-31 must be met before reopening IF sampling is temporarily suspended.* A satisfactory bacteriological sample result will be necessary to reopen any public/semi-public aquatic venue in which bacteriological sampling has been temporarily suspended.

**Additional Resources:**

ISDH - Novel Coronavirus: (COVID-19)

<https://coronavirus.in.gov/>

CDC - Water Transmission and COVID-19

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>

PHTA - Coronavirus Update: Keep Calm and Wash Your Hands

<https://www.phta.org/news/coronavirus>