PROCEDURES FOLLOWING CONTAMINATION INCIDENTS IN A SWIMMING POOL/SPA:

FECAL ACCIDENTS, VOMITING, BLOOD CONTAMINATION, NEAR DROWNING AND DROWNING INCIDENTS

Contamination of pool water can be of great public health concern. It is important to have a plan of action to ensure that any health hazards are addressed immediately to protect pool users. When a swimmer in a pool or spa has a fecal accident or vomits it may not be clear what is the best course of action. Although most bacteria, microbes and viruses in pool/spa water are killed by the proper use of sanitizers, some microbes such as Cryptosporidium and Giardia take longer to be removed from the water and therefore require a more aggressive approach. A drowning or near drowning may cause the victim to become incontinent, causing a fecal accident and a source of contamination. The type of stool has an effect on the method used to sanitize the pool or spa. The following requirements to clean and sanitize the pool/spa water are based on whether the stool is solid or loose (diarrheal). Reference CCR Title 22 § 65546.

What to Do – All Fecal Accidents

- ✓ Evacuate all swimmers from the water and post the pool/spa as "Closed". If you have multiple pools/spas on the same filtration system all of the pools/spas sharing the filter will have to be closed throughout the sanitizing procedure.
- ✓ Physically remove as much fecal matter as possible using a scoop or net. Vacuuming stool from the pool is not recommended. Make sure to thoroughly clean and sanitize the scoop or net with bleach after you have finished collecting the fecal matter.
- ✓ Ensure that the filtration system is operating while the pool reaches and maintains the proper free chlorine concentration during the disinfection process. Test the free chlorine residual at multiple points throughout the entire disinfection time.

Solid Stool

- Maintain the free chlorine level in the pool/spa to 2 parts per million (ppm) while maintaining the pH at 7.5 or lower. The water temperature should be at least 77°F (25°C).
- After maintaining these levels for 25 minutes, the pool/spa may be reopened. Monitor the chlorine levels and pH throughout the 25 minute period and make sure that the filtration system is on during the entire process.

Loose Stool (Diarrhea)

- Measure and maintain the pH at 7.5 or lower.
- Measure and maintain the temperature at 77□F (25□C) or higher
- Raise the free chlorine level in the pool to 20 ppm and maintain for 12 hours and 45 minutes before re-opening the pool/spa.

- If the pool water contains chlorine stabilizer such as cyanuric acid, lower the pH to 6.5 and raise the free chlorine level to 40 ppm and maintain this concentration for at least 30 hours.

- ✓ Make sure to backwash the filtration system properly at the end of the disinfection period. Do not return the backwash water to the pool. Replace filter media or cartridge filters before re-opening the pool/spa.

- ✓ Return the free chlorine and pH levels to the normal operating range before allowing bathers to re-enter the pool/spa.

What to Do- Blood Contamination

- ✓ Test the pool free chlorine level at the time of the incident. If it is below the required minimum free chlorine level, close the pool/spa until the required minimum level is achieved.

What to Do – Vomiting

- ✓ Vomiting in a pool/spa often results from swallowing too much pool water, which means the vomit is probably not infectious. If the contents of the stomach are vomited, the germs most likely to be spread are Noroviruses.

- ✓ Take the same precautions and follow the steps listed above for a solid stool incident.

What to Do – Drowning or Near-Drowning

- ✓ For a drowning or near drowning incident, which results in fecal contamination from incontinence, take the same precautions and follow the steps for a loose stool incident as listed above.

Immediately document each fecal, vomit, blood contamination, drowning, or near drowning incident and maintain records for 2 years.

1. Date and time of the incident:_____
2. Affected pool/spa:_____
3. Free chlorine concentrations:_____
4. Temperature & pH at time of the incident:_____
5. Fecal stool formed or diarrheal? _____
6. Number of pool users:_____
7. Facts known about the circumstances and cause of the incident:_____
8. Procedures followed in responding to the incident:_____
9. Length of time between the occurrence, detection, and resolution of incident:_____