

Mercer County – Celina City Health Department

Swimming Pool, Spa, and Special Use Pool

Fecal Accident Response Guidance

If formed stool is found in the pool, the following steps need to be taken:

1. Direct everyone to leave the pool. If you have multiple pools that use the same filter – all pools will have to be shut down. Do not allow anyone to enter the contaminated pool(s) until all decontamination procedures are completed.
2. Remove as much of the fecal material as possible using a net or scoop and dispose of it in a sanitary manner. Clean and disinfect the net or scoop (e.g., after cleaning, leave the net or scoop immersed in the pool during disinfection).
3. Raise the chlorine to 2 ppm (if less than 2 ppm), and ensure the water's pH is between 7.2 – 7.8 and the temperature is about 77° F. This chlorine concentration was selected to keep the pool closure time to approximately 45 minutes.
4. Maintain the chlorine concentration at 2 ppm, pH 7.2 – 7.8, for at least 45 minutes before reopening the pool. Ensure that the filtration system is operating while the pool reaches and maintains the proper free chlorine concentration during the disinfection process.

If diarrhea is found in the pool, the following steps need to be taken:

1. Direct everyone to leave the pool. If you have multiple pools that use the same filter – all pools will have to be shut down. Do not allow anyone to enter the contaminated pool(s) until all decontamination procedures are completed.
2. Remove as much of the fecal material as possible using a net or scoop and dispose of it in a sanitary manner. Clean and disinfect the net or scoop (e.g., after cleaning, leave the net or scoop immersed in the pool during disinfection).
3. Raise the free chlorine concentration to 20 ppm and maintain the water's pH between 7.2 – 7.8 and a temperature of about 77° F. The chlorine and pH should remain at these levels for at least 12.75 hours to achieve the most likely inactivation of potential parasitic organisms. *For this disinfection, do not use a chlorine that contains a stabilizer, such as cyanuric acid, dichlor and trichlor.* CDC data shows that stabilizers reduce the effectiveness of chlorine against parasitic organisms.
4. Ensure that the filtration system is operating while the pool reaches and maintains the proper chlorine level during disinfection. If necessary, before attempting the hyper-chlorination of any pool, consult an aquatics professional to determine the feasibility, the most optimal and practical methods, and needed safety considerations.
5. Backwash the filter thoroughly after reaching the specified contact time listed above. Be sure the effluent is discharged directly to waste and in accordance with state / local regulations. Do not return the backwash water through the filter. Where appropriate, replace the filter media.
6. Allow swimmers back into the pool after the required contact time and concentration has been achieved and the chlorine level has been returned to the normal operating range allowed by Ohio's Swimming Pool, Spa and Special Use Pool Regulations.

In both cases, establish a fecal accident log. Document each fecal accident by recording the date and time of the event, whether it involved formed stool or diarrhea, and the free chlorine and pH levels, the procedures followed in response to the fecal accident (including the process used to increase chlorine levels if necessary), and the contact time.