

# Pool News

August 2020

Whatcom County Health Department (WCHD), Environmental Health Division, Water Recreation Facility Program

## Pool Usage During COVID-19



Whatcom County  
**HEALTH**  
Department



Hi Pool Facility Owners and Operators,

Our Department has received numerous inquiries about pool usage during the COVID-19 pandemic. We want to provide information to help clarify the Phase 2 requirements currently in effect for Whatcom County.

- Washington State's rules and regulations for Water Recreational Facilities (Chapter 246-260, Washington Administrative Code) defines pools as either "limited use" or "general use". A limited use pool is any swimming pool, spa pool (hot tub), wading pool, or spray pool at an apartment, boarding home, condominium, home owners association, hotel/motel, mobile home park, RV park, fraternity/sorority or rental housing unit for the use of the persons living or residing at the facility and their invited guests.
- Currently, all limited use pools are restricted from use until Phase 3. [COVID-19 Prevention Guidance and Reopening of Water Recreation Facilities in Phases \(Revised\)](#) from the Washington State Department of Health outlines the conditions under which they can reopen.
- The only swimming pools that may operate in Phase 2 are those that are staffed, of "general use" and under the conditions outlined below.
- Per the Governor's document, [Staffed Water Recreation Facilities \(Public and Private\) COVID-19 Reopening Requirements](#), authorized operations at staffed general use water recreation facilities pools are limited to:
  - appointment-only lap swimming,
  - one-on-one lessons, and
  - small group classes (groups of 5 or less)
  - swim team training and diving classes (one swim coach may train more than one group of 5 students at a time as long as the facility's lifeguarding plan is followed).
  - At this time, this **does not** include the following:
    - spa pools (hot tubs) and wading pools,
    - Reservations for people (of the same household or beyond) for other than what is outlined in the conditions above.
- All other water recreation facilities (such as swimming pools, spa pools, and wading pools) permitted by our Department will be allowed to operate in Phase 3 with conditions outlined by the Washington State Department of Health. [COVID-19 Prevention Guidance and Reopening of Water Recreation Facilities in Phases \(Revised\)](#)

No business may operate until it can meet and maintain all the requirements in the governor's document, including schedules and equipment required to comply. In addition, lifeguards must be on duty where required by [WAC -246-260-131\(6\)](#).

Here are some resources for COVID-19 information:

- Whatcom Unified Command: <https://whatcomcovid.com/>
- Whatcom County, Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19): <https://www.whatcomcounty.us/3329/Novel-Coronavirus-COVID-19>
- Washington State Department of Health: <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/Coronavirus>