



Maryland Department of Health
Pool and Spa Diarrhea or Loose Stool Fecal Contamination Procedure

Procedures for Diarrhea (Loose Stool) Fecal Cleanup and Disinfection at a Public, Semi-Public, or Limited Public Use Pool and Public Spa

1. All bathers must be instructed to exit the pool water and the pool must be closed.
2. Signs must be posted stating that the pool is closed.
3. Scoop and remove as much fecal matter as possible from the pool and dispose of in a sanitary sewer, toilet, or other approved waste disposal system. Disinfect the scoop in bleach and water. Do not collect the fecal waste in the filters.
4. Clean up as much remaining fecal matter as possible using the vacuum system, but only if you can vacuum directly to a sanitary sewer waste line or other line approved waste disposal system. Do not collect the fecal waste in the filters. Clean and disinfect the vacuum equipment after use.
5. Keep the filters running through the following procedures.
6. Add disinfectant directly to the water starting at the accident area and continuing all around the pool or spa edge. Raise the free chlorine level to at least 10 parts per million (PPM) in the entire pool or spa.
7. Maintain the pH between 7.2 and 7.5 to allow the disinfectant to work properly.
8. **Take periodic readings and maintain the free chlorine at or above 10 PPM and the pH between 7.2 to 7.5 throughout the entire pool for 16 hours.** You may check the chlorine using a FAS/DPD kit, approved test strips, or dilutions to get accurate chlorine readings. Be careful with the pH measurements since the chlorine might bleach the pH color. (Add a few drops of sodium thiosulfate to the pH test.)
9. After sixteen hours with the chlorine level at 10 PPM, backwash the filter to remove any remaining fecal matter then disinfect the filter media using 1 part of bleach to 20 parts water. Restart the filters.
10. Reduce the chlorine level to between 1.5 PPM and 10 PPM for a pool, between 3.0 PPM and 10 PPM for wading pool, and between 4.0 PPM and 10 PPM for a spa. Check and re-balance the water chemistry.
11. Document the pool closure and record all readings in the daily operating records.
12. Reopen the pool.

NOTE: For spas and wading pools you may drain the water to waste and scrub the pool or spa with disinfectant. The piping and filter still need to be disinfected using a mixture of 1 part bleach to 20 parts water.

*This policy is based on a CT formula to kill the majority of organisms associated with fecal contamination of pool water, where C is the concentration in mg/L of the disinfectant and T is the time in minutes of exposure. The CT value used for this policy is 10 mg/l (10 ppm) chlorine for 16 hours which is the contact time necessary to disinfect Cryptosporidium.