



March 4, 2021

To whom it may concern,

As you are aware, 2020 presented several challenges to normal operations in North Carolina. In 2021, we can expect to see more of the same. In addition to the maintenance requirements necessary to operate your pool, spa, water recreation area or therapy pool, signage for occupancy levels and social distancing guidelines need to be posted and observed during the pool season. The Governor, using guidance from NC DHHS, issues Executive Orders to help us navigate through this pandemic. This guidance is necessary for business owners and operators to remain open and keep citizens as safe as possible during this difficult time. As of the date of this letter, Executive Order 195 is in effect and states the following regarding swimming pool, spa, water recreation activities:

2.5. Face Coverings and Exercise.

People must wear Face Coverings while exercising if they are outdoors and within six (6) feet of someone who does not reside in the exercising person's household [this includes the pool deck area]. However, if people are doing activities that may cause the Face Covering to become wet, like swimming or other activities in a pool, lake, water attraction, or similar body of water, the mask does not have to be worn.

3.12. Pools.

a. Indoor and Outdoor Pools May Open. During the effective period of this Executive Order, indoor or outdoor pool facilities (whether stand-alone or part of other facilities) may operate but must be in compliance with this Subsection.

b. Requirements. While this Executive Order is in effect, all open pool facilities must do all of the following:

- 1. Limit the number of Guests in the pool and the pool deck to no more than 50% of maximum occupancy as determined by fire code [1 person per 100 sq. ft.].*
- 2. Follow the Core Signage, Screening, and Sanitation Requirements as defined in this Executive Order.*

You must obtain a permit from the Onslow County Health Department each year before operating a public pool.

Enclosed you will find an application for this year's permit. Please complete a separate application for each pool, wading pool, water recreation area or spa. If you need more than one application, feel free to make copies of the enclosed application or contact us for additional copies. Please provide an email address on your completed application.

Return each completed application along with a permit fee of \$225.00 for each pool, spa, water recreation area and wading pool as soon as possible but no later than April 30, 2021 for seasonal pools. Make checks payable to the Onslow County Health Department and place the name of the pool on the check. This will allow staff to efficiently process the application and will eliminate possible delays in scheduling inspections.

If you operate your pool year-round, your permit expires annually on its issuance date. Please check the date of your current permit and apply for a new permit at least 30 days prior to its expiration date.

Unless your pool complies with all requirements of the current rules, a permit cannot be issued. If the permit cannot be issued at the time of inspection, a revisit fee of \$65.00 will be incurred and must be paid before another inspection will be scheduled.

Additionally, once you have submitted your application, the annual fee, and the pool is ready to open, please contact our office to schedule an inspection. The Onslow County Government Offices will be closed for business on May 31, 2021, in observance of the Memorial Day holiday. Please do not hesitate to contact our department with any questions or concerns at (910) 938-5851.

Before any pool is issued an Operations Permit for the 2021 pool season it will be necessary for all pool owners or operators to provide documentation of when the safety covers were replaced. It is also likely some pools have changed pumps over the last five years, which could also affect selection of appropriate cover/grates to match the maximum pump system flow. For those reasons, this department requires pool owners to complete a Drain Safety Compliance Form with each application, attached with instructions, to indicate any change of cover/grate and/or pump installed on the pool since the original compliance check in 2010. **Please remember that replacement equipment needs to be pre-approved by Onslow County Environmental Health to ensure compliance with VGBA and the 15A NCAC 18A .2500 Rules Governing Public Swimming Pools.**

As industry is moving away from submerged suction outlets in new or remodeled pools, pool owners have also expressed a desire or need to eliminate skimmer equalizer line covers all together at existing pools. It is our desire to completely eliminate the skimmer equalizer lines this season if you choose to do so. Beginning immediately, pools may disable (plug) their skimmer equalizer lines which will eliminate the need for equalizer line covers and thus eliminate potential submerged suction hazards at your pool. Pools are not required to permanently disable or plug their skimmer equalizer lines. It is optional. Existing pools that would like to keep their equalizer lines covered with appropriate equalizer fittings may do so. The pool owner or operator will need to provide information regarding the manufacturer, model, maximum flow, life span, and installation date on the Pool Drain Safety Compliance Data form that is submitted to the local health department each year. For pools that choose the option to permanently disable or plug their skimmer equalizer lines, it will eliminate the need to maintain and provide updated equalizer line covers. For pools that disable their equalizer lines the information shall be supplied on the Pool Drain Safety Compliance Data form submitted to our office with the pool application.

If your pool was constructed with a vacuum port it "shall have self-closing caps designed to be opened with a tool" [.2518 (f)]. Pools that have ports that are readily accessible by bathers will not be permitted to operate and a replacement port shall be installed before a permit can be issued.

If you plan on operating your pool after dusk, please fill out the attached pool lighting diagram form. An inspector will contact you to meet at the pool after dusk to evaluate the pool lighting on the deck and in the water to ensure it is sufficient for night swimming.

Also, please see attached Electrical System Safety at Public Swimming Pools. All forms that have been attached can be accessed on the Onslow County Environmental Webpage @ <http://vw.rw.onslowcountync.gov/668/Environmental-Health-Division>.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call our department at (910) 938-5851, fax (910) 989-5819, or email Environmental_Health@onslowcountync.gov.

Sincerely,



Auguste Nelson-Graves
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Onslow County Health Department
Consolidated Human Services
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Enclosures: 2021 Pool Application
Drain Safety Compliance Sheet and Instructions
Electrical System Safety at Public Swimming Pools
Pool Night Lighting Documentation Form