

# Fact sheet

## Public swimming and spa pools and novel coronavirus (COVID-19)

### Response to questions from the swimming pool industry on COVID-19 on whether it is still safe to go swimming? Can the virus be transmitted through pool water?

**COVID-19 will be killed** at the levels of chlorine recommended for use in public swimming pools in Queensland.

It is generally safe to go swimming at this time. The chlorine within public swimming pools will help to kill the virus. Of concern, though, is the interaction that pool users have with each other **outside the swimming activity**. The COVID-19 situation is evolving, and characteristics of the virus are still being determined, so this advice is subject to updating.

For everyone's safety, Queensland Health is urging the managers of public swimming pools to ensure:

- Frequent, regular, testing of the pool water for pH and disinfectant levels.
- That pH and disinfectant levels should comply with Queensland Health guidance in the new [Water Quality Guidelines for Public Aquatic Facilities \(2019\)](#).
- Monthly bacteriological tests (**NOT** virus testing) of pool water should be carried out by a laboratory approved for the testing by the National Association of Testing Authorities.
- The pool manager must ensure that all objects and surfaces in the pool environment that are touched by the public are cleaned and disinfected frequently by pool staff. This includes public areas, changing rooms, toilets and kiosks.
- The pool manager must also ensure that there is a constant supply of soap available in changing rooms and toilets.
- There must be no gatherings of more than 500 persons at a facility, in accordance with Commonwealth Government requirements.

For updates on the coronavirus situation in Queensland, including advice about reducing the spread of the infection, pool managers are advised to check the Queensland Health coronavirus website.

<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/clinical-practice/guidelines-procedures/diseases-infection/diseases/coronavirus>

It is more important than ever that all bathers who are unwell should be discouraged from using the pool. Pool managers should follow the guidance in **Chapter 8 Healthy Swimming** in the Queensland Health [Water Quality Guidelines for Public Aquatic Facilities \(2019\)](#).

### Response to members of the public on what pool users should do to remain safe at public swimming pools?

Do not visit an aquatic facility if you are unwell for any reason. If you have had diarrhoea you should not use a public swimming pool for 14 days after symptoms have ended.

Users of public swimming pools should shower before entering the pool to remove impurities typically found on our bodies. In the current circumstances it is not recommended to shower on leaving the pool; this can be done on returning home. This is because the bodies of bathers will have been cleaned by their activity in the disinfected pool, whereas bathers arriving at the facility have come in off the street and could be carrying germs on their hands and bodies.

Bathers are also strongly encouraged to observe good [public hygiene practices](#), including frequent hand washing when out of the water, after touching surfaces that others have touched and before eating.

<https://www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/health-alerts/coronavirus-covid-19/take-action/coronavirus-prevention>