On-Time POOL SERVICE, INC.
your water pro

NEWS SPLASH

SUMMER 2015

IS MY POOL LEAKING?

Many pool owners will wonder if their pool is losing water due to an undisclosed leak. Fortunately, there is an easy method to find out if this is the case.

All pools will lose water due to evaporation, generally about 1/8 inch per day. This loss can equate to almost an inch a week but the rate of loss can vary greatly based on water temperature, air temperature, humidity and pool use. Also, pools with water features, such as waterfalls, will experience greater evaporative loss.

If you suspect a leak, an easy way to find out is to conduct a 'Bucket Test'. Take a large bucket and partially fill it with water. Mark the water level inside the bucket with a piece of tape or pen. Then place the bucket in your pool on the top step. Make a second mark on the outside the bucket of the pool's water level. Allow the pool to run normally for 3-4 days. After this time, if the water level outside the bucket has dropped significantly more than the water level inside the bucket, you can almost certainly conclude there's a leak.

Most pool leaks are found around the skimmer or behind the pool light and can be easily repaired with putty or an epoxy. Completely draining the pool is usually not required but a specialist will be needed to dive into the pool using scuba equipment for proper detection and repair.

If you suspect your pool is leaking, please let us know and we can make recommendations for best next steps for correction.

SWIMMING POOL SICKNESS

If a swimming pool is not properly cared for from a sanitation standpoint, it is possible to become sick from exposure. This is more likely in public pools which have high usage.

The most common symptoms are intestinal, caused by swallowing water contaminated with the microorganism *E. coli* or worse *Cryptosporidium*. The source for these microbes is fecal matter - even trace amounts shed from swimmer's bodies.

Cryptosporidium is resistant to chlorine and is one reason it's important to shower before swimming and not swallow any pool water. It is a particularly nasty parasite that can cause diarrhea, stomach pains and nausea lasting weeks.

Of course, most pools (especially yours) are normally safe to use and enjoy. It is important, though, to know the hazards that can exist and how to protect yourself.

CYANURIC ACID - FRIEND & FOE

Cyanuric acid is a chemical that protects chlorine from decomposition from the sun. It is also referred to as stabilizer or conditioner. Cyanuric acid can be added directly to the pool as a white powder and is also found in chlorine tablets or "pucks". Cyanuric acid does not degrade so whatever is added to the pool, stays in the pool.

If a pool does not have enough cyanuric acid, chlorine is very quickly dissipated by sunlight. If the cyanuric acid is too high (>100 ppm), it will bind up chlorine and not allow it to work as a sanitizer. This is one of the reasons we use chlorine tablets only in the summer - to limit the amount of cyanuric acid added to the water.

Many times, a new account's pool will have cyanuric acid levels that are too high. As such, it is very hard to keep the water algae-free as any chlorine added is 'bound' up by the high cyanuric acid and not available to kill algae. There are only two solutions to this problem - the most common being to drain off a large portion of the pool water and add fresh water. A second method has been recently introduced that uses microbial enzymes. Either way, for a pool to be well-balanced and kept algae-free, the cyanuric acid must be at the correct level.

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