

MAY 2018

Splash!

A Pool Safety Newsletter

For Brown-Nicollet, Cottonwood and Watonwan Counties

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Healthy Swimming Issue

Healthy and Safe Swimming Week 2018 — The week before Memorial Day is National Healthy and Safe Swimming Week. The goal of this awareness week is to maximize the health benefits of swimming by minimizing the risk of illness and injury.

Each of us plays a role in preventing illnesses and injuries linked to the water we swim in and share, this summer and year-round.

Why Is This Important? In 2000–2014 (the last year for which national data are available), approximately 500 outbreaks were linked to swimming in pools, spas, and water playgrounds.

Most of the outbreaks caused by germs were caused by *Cryptosporidium* (or “Crypto” for short), *Legionella*, or *Pseudomonas*. Pool disinfection chemicals (bromine, chlorine) can kill most germs in public pools, spas, and water playgrounds within minutes at concentrations recommended by your local health department. But Crypto can survive for days at these chlorine concentrations. Diarrheal incidents in the water can easily spread Crypto and cause outbreaks if the contaminated water is swallowed. *Legionella* and *Pseudomonas* live in biofilm (slime on wetted surfaces). This means they are protected and can grow even when pool disinfection chemical concentration is properly maintained. Lungs can get infected with *Legionella* when breathing in contaminated water droplets produced by spa jets.

**Pool operators and pool employees play an important role in
Healthy swimming!!!**

See inside for important information, requirements and printed resources to help you provide a safe and healthy place to swim!

Recreational Water Illness (noun): Illness caused by germs found in the water we swim in.

Recreational water illnesses (RWIs) are caused by germs spread by swallowing, breathing in mists or aerosols of, or having contact with contaminated water in swimming pools, hot tubs, water parks, water play areas, interactive fountains, lakes, rivers, or oceans. RWIs can be a wide variety of infections, including gastrointestinal, skin, ear, respiratory, eye, neurologic and wound infections. The most commonly reported RWI is diarrhea. Diarrheal illnesses can be caused by germs such as Crypto (short for [Cryptosporidium](#)), [Giardia](#), [Shigella](#), [norovirus](#), and [E. coli O157:H7](#).

Roles and Responsibilities

Managers can help stop the transmission of waterborne illnesses and prevent outbreaks from occurring by doing the following:

- Train employees to recognize the symptoms of waterborne illness.
- Inform employees of your employee illness policy. If you do not have a policy, institute one.
- Record all employee reports of illness on an employee illness log. Keep the log in a place that can easily be found by all managers
- Exclude ill employees from work while they have diarrhea or vomiting (Employees diagnosed with Cryptosporidium should not enter the water until 2 weeks after their symptoms have stopped). Alternate job duties may be given during this time.
- Have a plan in place to find substitutions for employees who are ill and cannot work.
- An Employee Illness Log has been included with this newsletter. USE IT!

Enforcement through inspections of public swimming pools is an important tool in preventing recreational water-associated illness and injury. Our inspection of your public swimming pool is an assessment of whether its operation and maintenance meet the standards set in your local Swimming Pool Ordinance.

During inspections, we hope to serve as illness-and-injury-prevention advisors to pool operators. Inspections offer an opportunity to educate operators about how to properly operate and maintain public swimming pools and why these measures are necessary to prevent repeated violations of given operation or maintenance standards. By closing venues that pose a serious public health threat and by identifying violations to be corrected, environmental health practitioners play a vital role in minimizing risk for illness and injury at public aquatic facilities.

FACTS:

Almost 1 in 8 (12.1%) routine pool inspections conducted identified serious violations that threatened public health and safety and resulted in an immediate closure.

More than 1 in 10 (10.7%) routine pool inspections identified pool disinfectant level violations. Chlorine and other pool disinfectants are the primary barrier to the spread of germs in the water in which we swim.



Diarrhea and Swimming
DON'T MIX

If you have diarrhea, stay out of the water.
Don't share your germs with other swimmers.

For more information, visit www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming



Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Employees play an important role in keeping the water safe and healthy for everyone. Employees should: • Know the symptoms of waterborne illness. • Report any illness to management. • DO NOT work while ill with diarrhea or vomiting.

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Have a Healthy, Safe, Summer!!