

# Maintaining your Swimming Pool

## 1) Water Chemistry

A) Sanitizer levels - Chlorine is the chemical that keeps your water clean and bacteria free. Algae and Bacteria's are not able to survive in a pool properly treated with Chlorine. The key is to maintain a constant level of sanitizer, if you allow your Chlorine levels to bounce around you could end up with algae or cloudy water. If you have a salt generator, which produces Chlorine, this step will be taken care of for you. If you do not have a Salt Generator Backyard Delights will design a Chlorine program that will suit your needs. **Proper Chlorine levels are 1.5 - 3.0 PPM**

B) Proper PH - The PH scale tells us if the water is acid or base. The PH scale runs from 0 - 14 with 7 being neutral. If your Ph reading (on your test strip) falls below 7 this means your water is ACID and can damage anything metal in the system (including heater, lights, pump components, chlorinators, ect). If your PH falls below the desired levels add PH UP (soda ash) to bring your PH back up. A high PH is equally undesirable as it can lead to cloudy water and can reduce the effectiveness of your Chlorine. PH down is used to lower your PH levels. **The Proper PH level is between 7.3 - 7.8.**

C) Proper Alkalinity - Proper Alkalinity levels in your pool water will act as a buffer against the effects of low Ph, protecting your equipment from damage. Alkalinity is slow to change unlike Ph which can change from the effects of acid rain, heavy bathing load or the addition of new water. Alkalinity up (baking soda) is used to raise your alkalinity. **Proper Alkalinity reading is between 90 - 120 PPM**

D) Calcium Hardness - Calcium hardness of your water will only need to be checked periodically as these levels do not fluctuate unless you have added a lot of water. Your Calcium will only need to be adjusted once per season (in most cases). Proper calcium levels help protect your pools finish (fiberglass, vinyl, gunite alike), damage can occur over the long term and it is irreversible. **Proper Calcium levels are between 250 - 350 PPM.**

E) Stabilizer - This very important chemical is what holds your Chlorine in the water allowing it to do it's job. Stabilizer wraps around the Chlorine molecule protecting it from the sun. Without proper levels of Stabilizer your pool will grow algae and will not be clear and blue. Stabilizer is usually adjusted 1 time per season unless a lot of water has been added to the pool. Too much Stabilizer can reduce Chlorines ability to kill bacteria. This is called Chlorine lock out. **Proper stabilizer level are between 50 - 70 PPM.**

Inexpensive test kits or strips are available for your home use. They are easy to use and understand. Knowing how all the different components of your water work together will help you keep your pool sparkling blue. If you prefer, Backyard Delights will always test your pool water for free.

Remember, every pool is different, so learning your pool's personality and how best to maintain it will reduce cost and maintenance time. Test your water often and keep your chemicals balanced

## 2) How your system works:

Your system consists of a pump, which sucks water through the skimmer (top opening with the flapper) and usually through the bottom suction (s) (main drain). The water travels to the filter system. This could be a sand filter, cartridge filter, or diatomaceous earth (DE) filter, no matter what type of filter system you have, you can contact the service team at Backyard Delights for proper care and cleaning instructions. After your water has passed through your filter it is ready to travel through the heating system (if you have one). Heating systems can be gas, electric, solar or other alternative types of systems available. Understanding how to operate your type of heater can save huge amounts of money. If you don't have a heating system and would like one we will be happy to discuss the system best suited to your needs. From the Heater the water will pass through your Chlorinating system (if you have one), whether it be a salt generator or a tab feeder. These in-line chlorinators are designed to maintain a constant level of sanitizer to your pool water, they are a great asset to your pool equipment. Now that your water has traveled through your entire system it is ready to return to your pool through the jets located just below the surface of the water. Ask one of our professionals about the importance of jet positioning to get the most out of your filter and heating system. Your system should also have a time clock. Normal operation should be approximately 12 hours per day, your individual needs may vary depending on surrounding conditions and bathing load.

Tips on maintaining a clean, healthy pool

# Maintaining your Swimming Pool

- Keep your deck clean
- Keep trees, shrubs and other foliage away from the pool
- Minimal use of suntan oils
- Keep pool vacuumed
- Periodically brush the walls and waterline of your pool
- Keep your pets out of the pool
- Maintain proper water levels

Water safety is the #1 concern as a pool owner. Children and non swimmers should never be left alone by the pool for even a few seconds. If you are the “life guard” be sure to bring your phone, towels, radio, whatever you may need with you before allowing anyone into the pool.

I hope this helps you understand how your pool works and how to best take care of it. If you have any questions (and I’m sure you will) feel free to call Backyard Delights, free advice is always available.