



# State of Louisiana

## Department of Health and Hospitals Office of the Secretary

November 09, 2009

Glenn T. Cambre, Director  
Center for Environmental Health Services  
Office of Public Health  
Department of Health and Hospitals  
628 N. 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
P.O. Box 4489  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4489

Re: Letter of Intent/Clarification – Catch/Plunge Pools for Water Parks

Dear Mr. Cambre:

It has recently come to my attention that Part XXIV (Swimming Pools and Natural or Semi-Artificial Swimming or Bathing Places) of the Louisiana State Sanitary Code (LAC 51) does not provide design and operating conditions for catch/plunge pools. However, Section 103.A of this Part does prescribe that the State Health Officer has jurisdiction over the design, construction, and operation of all swimming pools, water parks, and water slides, public or private, including, but not limited to those owned by clubs, private schools, apartment houses, and condominiums. So, in reference to this Section, it is my intent to allow catch/plunge pools only when the following requirements are strictly met.

1. Definitions:

*Catch or Plunge Pool* — body of water located at the end of a recreational waterslide attraction provided for the purpose of terminating the slide action and providing a means for exit to a deck or walkway area.

2. Catch or plunge pools shall be constructed of concrete or other structurally rigid impervious materials with a non-toxic, smooth and slip resistant finish.
3. The minimum catch or plunge pool operating water depth at the slide flume terminus shall be three feet. This depth shall be maintained for a minimum distance of 10 feet in front of the slide terminus from which point the catch or plunge pool floor may have a constant upward slope to allow a minimum water depth of two feet at the base of the steps. The floor slope shall not exceed one foot in 10 feet. The catch or plunge pool water depth shall be commensurate with safety and the ease of exit from the plunge pool.
4. The catch or plunge pool dimension between any slide flume exit or terminus and the opposite side of the catch or plunge pool, excluding steps and handrails, shall be at least twenty feet (20'), or in accordance with the slide manufacturer's recommendations, whichever is the greater distance.

5. The distance between the side of a flume exit and a pool side wall shall be at least five (5') feet and the distance between sides of adjacent flume exits shall be at least six (6') feet, or in accordance with the slide manufacturer's recommendations, whichever is the greater distance.
6. Depth markers shall be provided for catch or plunge pools as required in LAC 51:XXIV.701.
7. Steps used for exiting the catch or plunge pool must be installed in compliance with the requirements set forth in LAC 51:XXIV.327.
8. A minimum 10 feet wide deck surface constructed in compliance with Part XXIV, Section 323 (Decks and Deck Equipment) of the Louisiana State Sanitary Code shall be provided along the entire exit side of the catch or plunge pool.
9. Where night use is allowed, area lighting of at least 2.0 watts per square foot of deck area shall be provided at the catch or plunge pool, along the slide, and at the starting pool or point.
10. A water circulation system consisting of pumps, piping, filters, water conditioning, disinfection equipment and other accessory equipment shall be provided in order to clarify, condition, and disinfect the catch or plunge pool volume of water and all water used for the slide in accordance with the requirements in LAC 51:XXIV. Chapter 5, except as otherwise specified in this letter of intent/clarification. The equipment shall be operated to turn over the entire water volume at least once every hour.
11. Catch or plunge pools and pump reservoirs shall have a perimeter overflow gutter system or a skimmer system which shall be an integral part of the filtration system meeting the requirements of Part XXIV, Section 515 (Surface Skimmer Systems) of the Louisiana State Sanitary Code.

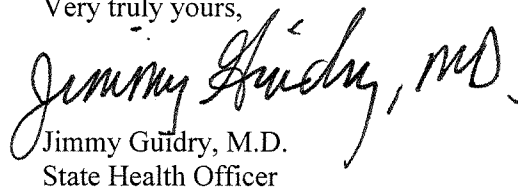
EXCEPTION: If an overflow gutter system is utilized, it is not required directly under slide flumes or along the weirs which separate catch or plunge pools and pump reservoirs.

12. Pump reservoirs shall be made of concrete or other impervious material with a smooth slip resistant finish. Pump reservoirs shall be provided for the slide pump intakes, but where properly sized, may also be used as a collector tank for the filtration system.
13. The minimum pump reservoir volume shall be equal to three minutes of the combined flow rate in gallons per minute (gpm) of all filter and slide pumps.
14. Pump reservoirs shall be accessible only to authorized individuals.
15. Access decks shall be provided for the pump reservoir such that all areas are accessible for vacuuming, skimming, and maintenance. The decks shall have a minimum width of three feet and shall have a minimum slope of ¼ inch per foot away from the reservoir.
16. The slide pump intakes shall be located in the pump reservoir and shall be designed to allow cleaning without danger of operator entrapment.

17. The pump reservoir shall have a minimum of one main drain with separate piping and valve to the filtration system collector tank and the velocity through the openings of the main drain grates shall not exceed one and one-half feet per second at the design flow rate of the filtration system pump. The main drain piping shall be sized to handle 100 percent of design flow rate of the filtration system pump with a maximum flow velocity of three feet per second.
18. The pump reservoir shall be fed by an overflow weir or main drains within the plunge pool. Main drains shall have the maximum flow velocity of 1.5 feet per second through the main drain grating and 3 feet per second through piping to the reservoir.
19. Slide pumps shall have check valves on all discharge lines.
20. All main drains accessible to the public shall comply with the federal Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act of 2007, as enforced by the U.S. Consumer Products Safety Commission.

Please ensure that copies of this letter are circulated to your staff and others as appropriate. Should questions arise, they should be directed to Mr. Jake Causey, P.E., Engineering Services Section, Center for Environmental Health Services, Office of Public Health. Mr. Causey may be reached at (225) 342-7499.

Very truly yours,

  
Jimmy Guidry, M.D.  
State Health Officer

JG/JKH/JKC/jkc

cc: Karen Irion, Chief Engineer, Engineering Services Section, CEHS, OPH  
Jake Causey, Engineer, Engineering Services Section, CEHS, OPH  
District/Regional Engineers, Engineering Services Section, CEHS, OPH  
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