

# City of Calistoga

## Staff Report

**TO:** Community Pool Advisory Committee  
**FROM:** Olivia Lemen, Recreation Manager  
**DATE:** September 4, 2013  
**SUBJECT:** August pool comments

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**ISSUE:**

Review the August comments/response placed in the comment box at the pool.

**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION:**

Staff regularly check and respond to comments left in the comment box. The consolidation of comments and responses are posted at the pool window, right next to the comment box. Attached are those comments and responses. Additionally, a detailed comment was submitted from a community member which requested action items to be taken by the Committee or City staff. This is attached for review.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- 1) August 19, 2013 comments
- 2) Tom Sherman comments

**Calistoga Community Pool**  
**Comment Responses August 19, 2013**

***“Chlorine level way too high. 2 kids out of pool with burning eyes, 3 others won’t go in. At a minimum, provide a warning.”***

We regularly monitor our chemical levels and close the pool if they are found to be unsafe – too high or too low. We apologize for any discomfort your family may have experienced.

***“Why do you put the blue thing on the pool?”***

The blue pool covers go on both pools each night to help maintain and retain the pool’s heat during the cool evening hours. The pool covers insulate the water and prevent heat from escaping when the pool is not in use.

***“Yuck! Hair in drain”***

We apologize that the drains were not clean and free from debris when you visited. We do a detailed cleaning of the facility at the end of every day. Sometimes “gunk” builds up during the daytime before we can get to it.

***“I love the crap out of this place! So many awesome staff members! Seriously dude you should be open for ever and ever!”***

***“Thank you for working”***

***“I like the pool”***

***“I had fun at swim lessons! I love my swim instructor!”***

***“Lifeguards are the best!” x2***

***“Thank you so much!”***

...

We are glad you enjoy this facility and that we will be able to stay open until October 20<sup>th</sup>

***“Shade cloth over pools”***

We love the idea and have looked into this in the past. At the time, the cost was more than \$40,000. I suspect it would be more now. If money were no object, then it would already be done.

## Olivia Lemen

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**From:** tomsherm [chakraman@earthlink.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 30, 2013 11:30 AM  
**To:** Olivia Lemen  
**Subject:** RECREATIONAL WATER ILLNESS

Greetings Olivia!

As follow-up to our brief phone conversation yesterday, I am writing to request you provide the POOL ADVISORY COMMITTEE with the materials I mention below, discuss this issue with them, and consider TAKING ACTION on the recommendations I have outlined below. I have provided you the CDC's HEALTHY SWIMMING brochure, an article from the July 16 PRESS DEMOCRAT titled RULES FOR THE POOL, and a 2 page article titled: "Are your children swimming in feces? If you're taking them to public pools, the answer is yes" abstracted from Natural News. This article clearly presents the research from the CDC on the the presence of E. coli bacteria in 58% of public pools and emphasizes the importance of SHOWERING BEFORE GETTING IN A POOL. I was made aware of the PRESS DEMOCRAT article by my Kaiser physician.

This issue was brought home in a big way with me when I got very ill with GI problems and a the worst skin rash I have ever experienced. Through extensive stool cultures and physical exams, I was diagnosed with one of the bad E. Coli bugs (Entamoeba Histolytica) and Pseudomona Aeruginosa (skin rash commonly associated with swimming pools). If you personally experienced the physical toll this took on my body, you perhaps would be much more concerned about this issue. Not only was I sick for several weeks, I incurred considerable expense for doctor visits, lab co-pays, and the 3 medications for a 20 day course of treatment. I also had to discontinue swimming so as to eliminate the possibility that I might further spread this infection.

While I can not say for sure Calistoga Pool is the source, I feel it is highly probable since the onset of these problems began during the time I was in Calistoga and using the pool extensively. This was also the period where there was a lot of dirt clearly visible on the bottom of the pool from the dirt moving next door. Dirt is a major source of a variety of the E coli bugs.

Two other issues may increase the amount of E.coli related bugs being brought into the pool:

1. With the decision to let Calistoga kids swim for free, the pool is the new Calistoga Day Care center making requiring showers even more important.
2. While I can not say from first hand observation, I've been told water aerobics class members walk into the pool with shoes they have been wearing outside as opposed to having pool shoes used only for this purpose and only put on for pool use. If this is true, this should be stopped immediately and monitored/controlled by the person(s) teaching these classes.

Regardless of source, the increased press from CDC is a clear wake up call to do all a public pool can do to minimize this risk to swimmers. While REQUIRING SHOWERING is not yet a requirement for pools from Public Health, I think it will not be long until Health Department requirements will change. I am asking you to get out in front of this issue and take a LEADERSHIP ROLE in addressing this issue proactively for Calistoga Pool.

My recommendations are as follows:

### **1. INITIATE REQUIRING SWIMMER'S SHOWER BEFORE ENTERING THE POOL**

While **REQUIRING** showering (versus strongly recommending) will not assure 100% compliance, it will increase the % of patrons showering and make people more aware of this issue. If this step is taken, I recommend backing it up by:

- \* developing LARGE SIGNAGE at the entrance of the pool.

- have the CDC brochures readily available for patrons to take and read at their leisure. Perhaps put these brochures in a holder on the new LARGE signage.
- having the front desk person politely educate/inform everyone who enters that the rules have changed and EVERYONE is now REQUIRED to shower before entering pool.
- instruct lifeguards to politely inform patrons of the requirement IF they see unshowered swimmers about to enter the pool OR when the person completes their swim and is exiting.

**2. REQUIRE ALL WATER AEROBICS CLASS PARTICIPANTS TO WEAR POOL ONLY SHOES**

- do not allow folks to walk in and enter pool with shoes they wear around outdoors.

**3. SUBMIT AN ARTICLE ON RECREATIONAL WATER ILLNESSES (RWI) AND RULE CHANGES TO BOTH CALISTOGA PAPERS**

- Educate the community at large about the problem of RWI and change of requirements about showering and shoes in the pool.

I appreciate you listening to my concerns and bringing this as an agenda item for the pool meeting tomorrow. Thanks! tom sherman