



CONSOLIDATED HUMAN SERVICES

Health Department
Environmental Health

July 13, 2020

On June 24, 2020, Governor Cooper issued Executive Order 147 to extend Phase 2 of reopening North Carolina. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the routine operations of many businesses, to include; public swimming pools, spas, water recreation areas and therapy pools. The new mandates include occupancy signage to be posted at each pool indicating the Phase 2 bather load, requirement to wear face masks unless exempted, to maintain a six-foot social distance and to wash hands with greater frequency. The temporary change in bather load and other items noted above shall be routinely monitored by the HOA or pool owner.

In the last two weeks, I have conducted visits to several properties to observe how these new rules and occupancy loads are affecting the operation of the public pools in Onslow County. While the day-time bather load seems to be under control with the exception of some beach locations on weekends, there are a number of individuals using swimming pools after hours where night swimming is not permitted. Night swimming is only allowed when specifically permitted by our office. My observations have included adults and children in pools with no interior pool lighting and no deck lighting, babies in pools wearing diapers without waterproof coverings, swimmers smoking in pools and extinguishing cigarettes butts in the skimmers, and the consumption of alcohol in glass bottles at pools after hours. These issues pose tremendous safety and liability issues for the HOA and pool owners.

Your Certified Pool Operators work diligently every day in an effort to keep your public swimming pool safe and clean. When they leave your property for the day, and individuals sneak into the pool afterhours with alcoholic beverages, the safety issues continue through the night and into the next day until the operator returns for maintenance. Broken bottles pose a significant threat to all bathers and they are very difficult to remove from the pool floor without completely draining the pool.

We are asking that you reach out to your homeowners and customers regarding the strict adherence to pool rules (including showering prior to entering the water) and the afterhours use of the pools on your properties. While our office is not tasked with enforcing the executive order for bather load, we are still responsible for regulating your pool and allowing it to operate. When it comes to public health and safety concerns, your CPO and our inspectors work together to protect you and your operation from accidents and injuries. We are asking for your assistance in communicating with your homeowners and their guests to curtail the illegal activities occurring afterhours on your properties. We encourage you to have a member of your HOA, on-

site management team or a member of your maintenance staff conduct compliance inspections during the day and after hours to ensure your swimmers are adhering with permit conditions and the Executive Orders.

If you are considering adding motion-detecting security lights and/or time-sensitive magnetic locks to your pool gates, please feel free to reach out to me or my staff for guidance. We are here to assist you.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Auguste Nelson-Graves', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Auguste Nelson-Graves, REHS
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