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AFM

Swimming Pool Industry

There appears to be a public health issue in the swimming pool industry of the UK. The problem has been reported on numerous occasions in the media, however no remedial action has been implemented. We recommend that there should be an independent investigation to determine the true extent of the problem.

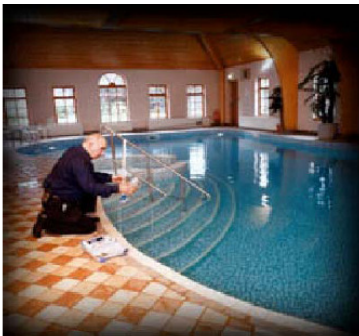
Infectious disease

It is estimated that there are in the order of 4000 cases of cryptosporidiosis among the public as a direct result of visiting a swimming pool. The figure is an estimate, it might be a great deal higher. The cryptosporidia will cause a disease similar to serious food poisoning. A healthy person will be debilitated for several days, however the disease can be grave for the elderly, infirm or infants. In addition to the cryptosporidia, there can be high transient concentrations of human pathogenic bacteria, viri, fungi and parasites. The incidence of swimming pool related transmission of disease has not been quantified, but it is likely to be as high as 20,000 cases per year in the UK



Sam Lister, Times Health Correspondent 2004, *A year-long survey by the Health Protection Agency of 88 health clubs found that 26 per cent of the baths contained legionella bacteria. About 300 cases of the disease are reported in England every year and it kills between 30 and 40 Britons annually.*

Chemical issues, cancer and respiratory disorders



We know that chlorine reacts with waste in the water to form chemicals that burn your eyes, cause cancer and damage your lungs. Recent research supported by the European Commission also shows that the atmosphere above the pool water can initiate asthma in children and may cause other serious respiratory disorders. The pool water quality criteria in countries such as Germany are much tighter than they are in the UK. Considering that the level of asthma in the UK is the highest in Europe with 20% to 30% of the teenage population suffering from respiratory problems. We should perhaps question the safety of exposing children and adolescents to poor quality swimming pool environments. Swimming has been compared to being as healthy as smoking a pack of cigarettes, while it may not be quite as bad as this statement, should we wait for 20 years until it is fully quantified, or do we act now?

Reason for the problem in swimming pools and a solution

There are many reasons for poor water quality and atmosphere in the UK swimming pool industry. AFM research has shown that sand will incubate bacteria in the filter. The bacteria reduce the performance of the filter by allowing pathogens to pass through the filter to the public. Pathogenic bacteria are also produced by the sand filter and discharged into the pool. The high concentration of bacteria also consumes the chlorine to form toxic chemicals. Simply changing the sand filter media to AFM will resolve many of these problems.

Recent data shows that a public pool using AFM can have atmospheric quality and water quality 50 times better than a standard public swimming pool. While the public health issues with regards to swimming pools have not been fully quantified, we have in the form of AFM media a simple means by which they can be improved. In addition, the added cost of the AFM is paid back in a matter of months by savings in chemicals.



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