



CLAY COUNTY

PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER



800 Haines Drive
Liberty, MO 64068
p. 816-595-4350
clayhealth.com

CLOSING OUTDOOR POOLS for the WINTER

Midwest winters can be hard on outdoor swimming pools. Closing your swimming pool properly can protect the pool from damage, keep it clean, and save you a lot of work when it comes time to open the swimming pool next spring. Here are some general steps you can follow to winterize your pool.

- 1. Don't close too early!** Late summer is the best time to close, even early October if the pool is heated. Water needs to be consistently below 65 degrees to avoid algae growth and other problems. Closing prematurely will only lead to more work and expense at pool opening in Spring.
- 2. Balance the water & add winterizing chemicals.** Algaecides will be destroyed by high chlorine, so balance first, then shock, and winterize last.
 - Balance your water – make sure you have the proper chlorine, ph, and alkalinity levels about 3 to 7 days prior to closing.
 - Shock the pool a couple days later.
 - When chlorine levels are back down to normal be sure to add a winter algaecide and let it go through the pool system for at least 1 day of operating the pool system.
- 3. Clean and vacuum the pool & backwash the filter.** You'll want to do one final brush and vacuum to winterize your swimming pool. Once this is done, it's time to back-wash your filter.
- 4. Drain the water.** Lower the level about 4"-6" below the lowest plumbing line, normally the water return line. Be sure the water level is at least below the skimmer. Use drain plugs to drain water from your pump, filter, heater and chlorinator. *All water must be drained or blown out so your equipment doesn't freeze and crack.* After draining, D.E. filter grids and cartridge filters should be removed and cleaned thoroughly. If possible, store filter and pump indoors. If not, use a shop vacuum or compressor to blow out any water that may still be in the equipment.
- 5. Winterize plumbing.** If you have an in-ground pool, you should blow out the lines from the skimmer, through the equipment and back to the pool, and then plug the lines at the pool using expansion plugs. If you don't blow the lines, add swimming pool antifreeze into the lines following manufacturer's package directions.
- 6. Empty the chemical feeder.** By leaving chemicals in your chemical feeder during swimming pool winterization, you might damage your equipment. Remember to put the top back on the chemical feeder and be sure to wear safety goggles and gloves.
- 7. Inspect, remove, and disable equipment.** Inspect the pool structure and all equipment for breaks or defects and replace or repair if damaged. Remove the skimmer baskets, heaters, slide, any wall fittings, vacuums, pool cleaners, ladders, handrails, or anything else that shouldn't be in the pool. Shut down pumps and disable timers.
- 8. Winter pool covers.** Use a solid cover that keeps out all debris and sun. These solid covers should keep the pool clean and prevent algae growth. An air pillow can also be used to hold the pool cover up like a tent so water and debris fall off instead of collecting on the top.
- 9. Chemical storage.** Chemicals should be stored in a cool, dry, well-ventilated area away from other products. They should be kept sealed and in their original containers. Properly dispose of test reagents and disinfectants that will deteriorate and lose potency over winter.
- 10. Secure the enclosure.** Make sure gates are properly secured and the fencing is in good repair. This is important to help keep children out while there is minimal supervision during the off season.

The mission of the Clay County Public Health Center is to deliver the essential public health services of prevention, promotion and protection to the communities of Clay County.