



Hot Topics

Super-Chlorination of Swimming Pools— What Level is Safe for Swimmers?

Sometimes closer examination coupled with a sound scientific approach is the best pathway to challenge a regulatory policy about health risks. This is the case with the use of super-chlorination and in understanding what is a safe level for people of all ages to re-enter a swimming pool. Super-chlorination is a process used periodically, more frequently in hot climates and seasons, to control disease-causing organisms. The Sapphire Group has presented data to the EPA to show that the current standard of 3 ppm, which the EPA is considering moving to 4 ppm, could actually be set as high as 10 ppm while still providing an ample margin of safety.

While still skeptical of the merits of this proposed increase of the re-entry standard beyond 4 ppm, the EPA has asked for additional data on the decay rates of chlorine and the formation rate of chloroform under conditions of super-chlorination. Such an undertaking may not be feasible in the field because of the many variables that exist among chlorinated pools. In its counter proposal to the EPA, The Sapphire Group is offering as an alternative the modification and use of computer models proven useful for chlorinated drinking water for application to chlorinated swimming pools. The Sapphire Group is confident in their use of these models, and believes the tool is ripe to provide highly accurate and applicable data to answer the EPA's questions and justify raising the safe levels of re-entry of swimmers into super-chlorinated swimming pools.