

Use the Model Aquatic Health Code To Make Swimming Healthy and Safe

Government agencies and the aquatics sector can use the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) to make swimming and other water activities healthier and safer.

The MAHC is a free, science-based resource to improve health and safety in

- **Public swimming pools**
- **Pools, hot tubs, and spas in hotels and apartment complexes**
- **Waterparks**
- **Other aquatic venues**

The MAHC guidelines address the design, construction, operation, maintenance, policies, and management of public aquatic facilities.

How can the MAHC be used?

The MAHC is a guidance document that government agencies can use to create or update existing pool codes.

It is not a federal law and only becomes law if adopted by a state or locality. This means government agencies can

- Choose whether to adopt it at all
- Choose to use all or only certain parts
- Modify part or all of it to fit their needs

Aquatics sector leaders don't have to wait for a government agency to adopt the MAHC. They can implement key MAHC elements now to start improving health and safety at their facilities.



Help keep people healthy and safe by using the MAHC to reduce these health risks

- **Drowning**
Drowning is a leading cause of unintentional injury-related death for children ages 1–14 years. Non-fatal drowning can cause brain damage resulting in learning disabilities or even permanent loss of basic functioning.
- **Chemical injuries**
Injuries linked to pool chemicals accounted for 3,000–5,000 emergency department visits each year. Almost half of the patients are under 18 years of age.
- **Waterborne illness outbreaks**
Outbreaks associated with pools and other aquatic venues have increased dramatically from an average of 15 per year (1993–2002) to 34 (2003–2012). A single outbreak can sicken thousands.
- **Public pool and hot tub closings**
Recent studies found that routine inspections resulted in immediate closure of 11.8% (1 out of 8) of public pools and 15.1% (1 out of 7) of public hot tubs because of health hazards.





Why is the MAHC important?

Swimming is one of the nation's most popular sporting and leisure activities. People in the United States make more than 300 million trips a year to pools and other bodies of water, but some of these places aren't healthy or safe. Swimming in public pools or other aquatic facilities that aren't healthy or safe can lead to drowning, injury from pool chemicals, or waterborne illness. Using the MAHC can help make swimming healthier and safer.

What does the MAHC include?

The MAHC includes model code language (code) and scientific explanations (annex). The MAHC addresses

- **Design and construction** – such as secondary disinfection systems to kill chlorine-tolerant organisms and reduce outbreaks
- **Operation and maintenance** – such as lifeguarding standards to reduce drowning
- **Policies and management** – such as training for pool operators to reduce pool chemical accidents, pool closures, and other issues

Check out these other sites for more information:

Council for the MAHC - www.cmahc.org

Healthy Swimming - www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming

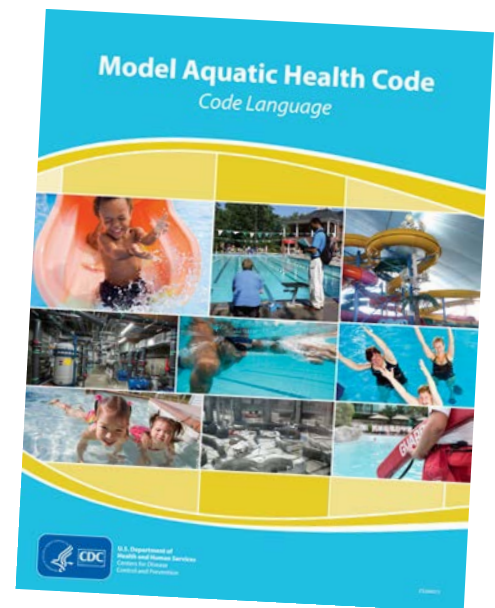
Healthy and Safe Swimming Week - www.cdc.gov/healthywater/observances/hss-week/

MAHC Network -

<http://www.naccho.org/programs/environmental-health/hazards/water/model-aquatic-health-code-mahc-network>

Recreational Water Resources for Environmental Health Professionals -

www.cdc.gov/nceh/ehs/Topics/recreationalwater.htm



Visit the MAHC online at
www.cdc.gov/mahc