

Model Aquatic Health Code Information

The Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) is a resource created by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to help make swimming and other water-related activities safer and healthier. It provides guidance on the design, construction, operation, and management of public aquatic facilities such as pools, spas, water parks, and hot tubs.

What It Is:

The MAHC is not a federal law, but a set of guidelines that state and local agencies can adopt as rules to improve the safety and quality of their aquatic facilities. The code is developed through a public, collaborative process with input from public health officials, pool operators, the aquatics industry, and academic experts. The MAHC covers a wide range of topics, including:

- **Water Quality:** Recommendations for water treatment and chemical use to manage pathogens and prevent waterborne illnesses.
- **Facility Design and Construction:** Guidelines on the design and construction of aquatic facilities to ensure safety and accessibility.
- **Operation and Maintenance:** Operational practices to maintain healthy water and facility safety, including filtration and disinfection practices.
- **Lifeguarding and Supervision:** Standards for lifeguarding and supervision to enhance safety through proper training and staffing.
- **Risk Management:** Measures for managing risks associated with aquatic facilities and improving safety through policies and training.

How to Use It:

Aquatic facility operators, health officials, and others involved in aquatic management can use the MAHC as follows:

1. **Adoption and Implementation:** Local or state health departments can adopt all or parts of the MAHC as regulations or codes. This provides a standardized approach to aquatic health and safety.
2. **Training and Compliance:** Facilities can train their staff according to MAHC guidelines to ensure compliance and improve operational safety.
3. **Routine Inspections:** The MAHC can be used as a basis for routine health and safety inspections to ensure ongoing compliance and to identify areas for improvement.
4. **Public Education:** Educating the public about safe swimming practices and the role of health and safety regulations in protecting swimmers.

The MAHC is updated periodically to incorporate the latest scientific knowledge and best practices. Facilities looking to improve safety and compliance should consult the latest edition of the MAHC, which is freely available on the CDC's website. Adopting MAHC guidelines can help reduce the risk of drowning, injuries, and disease outbreaks at aquatic facilities, ultimately providing a safer environment for the public.