NATIONAL PLASTERERS COUNCIL

**WHITE PAPER #8**

# CONSIDERATIONS FOR OWNERS WHEN REOPENING A WINTERIZED POOL

It is essential for certain regions of the country to close or "winterize" their pools. Typically, this is done by a professional pool service company. The specific winterization procedure and reopening of the pool will also vary depending on the region of the country. However, it is very important for the homeowner and the company that winterizes the pool to determine how the pool will be "handed off". Meaning, when does the winterizing company give the pool back to the homeowner and what are each Party's responsibilities in restoring the pool to its normal operating condition.

The following considerations and keys should be part of reopening a winterized pool, and will ensure that each Party is aware of their responsibly to properly reopen the pool.

## COVERS

Pools that are closed for the season typically use covers whether mesh or solid, or manual or automatic. The water chemistry can be affected in different ways depending on the type of cover. Mesh covers allow rain and snow to enter, diluting the water and altering the chemical balance. Solid covers tend to prevent water from entering the pool. Regardless of the cover type, the water chemistry will change dramatically during closure.

**Key #1:** It is important to determine which Party will clean, remove, and if necessary, store the cover.

## VISUAL INSPECTION OF THE INTERIOR FINISH

A visual inspection is necessary to understand whether the interior finish needs repair, or if it simply needs to be cleaned and put into service. Assuming no repairs are necessary, the following measures need to be taken in this order:

1. Fill the pool to the middle of the perimeter tile (or skimmer throat).
2. Clean the filter.
3. Start the pump.
4. Brush the entirety of the interior finish towards the drain.
5. If necessary, vacuum the pool.
6. Balance the water as per the National Plasterers Council's "Recommended Start-Up Procedures".

**Key #2:** It is important to determine which Party will clean the filter and start the pump.

**Key #3:** It is important to determine which Party will brush, and if necessary, vacuum the pool.

## REPAIR OF THE INTERIOR FINISH

Depending on the region of the country, or more specifically, the harshness of the winter, damage can occur to the interior finish. If the pool is under warranty it is strongly recommended to contact the builder or plasterer before attempting any repairs. Most often, the repair needed will involve the cleaning of stains that occurred during the winterization period, due to leaves, dirt, and debris entering the pool. The chosen chemical treatment can be an 'in-water' chemical treatment, or it may be an acid wash treatment where the water must be drained from the pool. Anytime the pool is drained, there is a risk of damaging the interior finish.

**Key #4:** It is important to determine if a chemical treatment or other repair is necessary and who will perform that service.

## WATER TESTING

Testing the pool water is crucial immediately after refilling the pool with water. Testing pool water always includes the following chemical parameters:

pH
cyanuric acid (CYA)
total alkalinity (as carbonate alkalinity)
calcium hardness (as $CaCO_3$)
TDS (total dissolved solids)
chlorine
metals (mainly iron and copper)
and temperature

It is recommended to have the water tested at a local Pool Supply Store.
If the calcium hardness or total dissolved solids are very high in concentration, it may be necessary to drain a portion of the water, or all of the water, so that the water chemistry can be easily maintained going forward.

**Key #5:** It is important to determine which Party will chemically rebalance the water (Note: This process can take 7 – 10 days).

## SUMMARY

Reopening a winterized pool requires a collaboration of efforts between the winterizing company and the homeowner to bring the pool into good operating condition.

**Key #6:** It is important to have good communication between Parties, and to delegate the responsibilities of each Party when reopening the pool.



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