

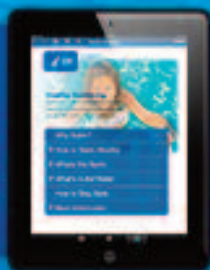
POOL CHEMICAL SAFETY



Pool Chemical Safety - Chlorine Institute



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Keep the Pool Safe This Summer

As the summer season approaches, residential pool owners and public pool operators should be sure to take safety precautions when using chemicals to treat the water to protect both themselves and swimmers from potential health hazards.

Nationally, nearly 5,000 people visited an emergency room for injuries associated with pool chemicals, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The Department is advising residential pool owners and public pool operators to take the following steps to prevent injuries due to pool chemicals including:

- Read and follow directions on product labels
- Check pool chemical levels before making an adjustment
- Use a new test kit each season and check the kit's expiration date
- Wear appropriate safety equipment such as goggles and masks, as directed
- Keep young children away when handling chemicals
- NEVER mix different pool chemicals with each other
- No swimmers should be in the water while adding chemicals
- The pool area should not have a strong chlorine smell

More information is available at: <http://goo.gl/18cBPp>

In New Jersey, the Department is reminding pool operators that employees also face health concerns, especially when manually adding chlorine-based chemicals to the water. Exposure to these chemicals may be associated with work-related asthma, the aggravation of existing asthma conditions or the onset of asthma symptoms, including: wheezing, coughing, shortness of breath and difficulty breathing.

Regulations require pool operators to add chemicals through an automated system; however, manual application of chlorine-based chemicals is sometimes unavoidable, increasing the risk of unsafe exposure levels to potential irritants. Studies that have examined exposure to chlorine have found that lifeguards and other pool employees have an increased risk of asthma.

In New Jersey, 14 cases of work-related asthma from chlorine-based products were identified from 1990-2011. The Department recently distributed more than 780 brochures to owners and operators of indoor and outdoor swimming pools, as well as local health departments alerting them to the risks of exposure. The flyer "Don't Get Sick When Applying Pool Chemicals," is available at: <http://goo.gl/FJWDTu>

As part of that same distribution, the Department provided a questionnaire to pool owners on the application of chlorine-based products. Results from the survey indicate that 78% of pool owners manually adjust pH and chlorine levels, 42% of employees directly applied chemicals into the pool, 31% of employees were not required to wear personal protective equipment and 21% of employees were not provided training on the manual application of chemicals.

The Department recommends that pool operators consider providing additional education to employees on the dangers of chemicals and pool maintenance.

Keeping New Jersey Healthy


Commissioner O'Dowd with Dr. Joseph Miller, Meridian Health and John K. Lloyd, President/CEO, Meridian Health, at a roundtable promoting physician awareness of post-Sandy stress in children and families.



Commissioner O'Dowd addresses a physicians roundtable. Seated from the left are Meridian Health President/CEO John K. Lloyd; Commissioner Allison Blake; Dr. Ramon Solhkhah, Meridian Health; and Renee Burawski, director of Sandy Recovery, Division of Mental Health & Addiction Services for DHS.

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Post Sandy Stress in Children and Families

By Mary E. O'Dowd, MPH, Commissioner, New Jersey Department of Health



In an effort to raise awareness of the need for health care professionals to screen and refer children and families challenged by post-Sandy stress to appropriate resources, several physicians joined Children and Families Commissioner Allison Blake and me for a panel discussion at Riverview Medical Center in Red Bank on May 28.

As we know from studies of previous natural disasters, physicians participating in the roundtable explained that the effects of disaster stress can be long-lasting and often may not surface until long after the storm. And with hurricane season beginning, that could trigger post-traumatic stress reactions in some individuals who are still displaced or facing rebuilding challenges.

"Now is when we are really going to see people presenting who need help," said Dr. Joseph Miller, Meridian Health's corporate director for neuroscience, behavioral health, orthopedics, and rehabilitation medicine. He pointed out that many people started showing problems about 18 months after September 11, 2001.

Roundtable participants also noted that people experiencing behavioral health issues are more likely to seek care in a medical rather than mental health setting.

Dr. Cheryl Bettigole, Chief Medical Officer for CompleteCare, a community health center that serves low-income residents in Gloucester, Cumberland, and Cape May Counties, said often the

psychological consequences of the storm can't be separated from physical symptoms.

Dr. Bettigole said her Center has treated a lot of individuals who did not report being depressed, yet tested positive for depression or other behavioral health issues on the universal screening tool for post traumatic stress.

Dr. Margaret Fisher, a pediatric infectious disease specialist with Monmouth Medical Center and president of the State Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), said stress can be tolerable but sometimes becomes toxic in children as it can affect brain development and lead to developmental problems.

There is also evidence that child abuse may increase following a natural disaster. In the six months after Hurricane Floyd hit North Carolina, there was a five-fold increase in traumatic brain injuries in children under two years old in counties severely affected by the hurricane. Counties that were less affected or not affected at all didn't experience an increase, according to the World Health Organization.

Dr. Fisher, who serves on a national panel on Disaster Preparedness and Response for the American Academy of Pediatrics, commended the state for making the health consequences for children a priority from the first days after the storm. "We found out immediately that children were not going to be forgotten. I think that makes New Jersey a unique place."

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