

J.A.K. Water Systems Ltd

Leisure Centre Closures and COVID-19

As we are all aware as of Friday 20th March 2020, the government took the decision to force all gyms and leisure centres to close.

Please be assured that JAK have put contingencies in place to ensure some level of business continuation during this period. We are adapting and reviewing working practices to ensure that we are here to support and offer assistance as and when required.

The health and safety of our colleagues and our customers is our highest priority. We know the coming days and weeks will be filled with uncertainty and we want to help support you as best we can. Whilst we agree with the decision, in the attempt to suppress the spread of the Coronavirus, it will leave pool operators with several decisions to make.

With most commercial swimming pools, it is common that pools will only be closed for maybe 3 days a year, being Christmas day, Boxing day and new years day. It is current unknown how long the enforced closures will be, but it seems likely it will initially be for 2 – 3 months.

While there are many options of how to manage your swimming pools during this period, they can really be put in to 3 categories of thought.

1. Switch all the pool systems off, returning to switch on a few days before

reopening.

2. Leave all the systems running and manage them as if the pool is being bathed as normal.

3. Manage the pool systems in a reduced capacity, taking the view of keeping things ticking over during the period of closure.

It would be hoped that of the above options, as operators you would be drawn to option 3. Options 1 and 2 both carry likely and guaranteed costs.

Taking the option to shut everything down and leave it, is highly likely to result in extra works begin required before reopening. Some of those extra works being expensive pump replacements due to seizing and works to deal with stagnate water etc.

Leaving systems running as if normal, while giving the best option for water quality long term will give the operational day to day running costs. With modern swimming pools it is likely that you can operate most areas of the pools systems at reduced capacity, thus creating the balance between water quality and running cost.

With the pools having now been free from bathers for 48 hours, it would be an ideal time to put in place the following strategies.

- Switch off pool UV systems if you have them.
- Switch off pool PAC dosing systems if you have them.
- Turn off pool water heating. Being mindful that if booster pumps are used these should be turned over every couple of days.
- As with normal operation it would be advised to adjust the air temperature based on the water temperature. As the water temperature drops the air temperature should be kept 1 degree higher. If site can control via a humidity setpoint, this should be aiming for 60 %.

- All sites should be fitted with automatic dosing controllers. If this is the care they should be left on, with adjustments made. Chlorine levels maintained around 1.00mg/l, with a pH of 7.2 – 7.4. Due to the changes with chemical setpoints & the water temperature it maybe that the alarm points on the control will also need to be adjusted.
- With no bathing the levels of chemical required by the controller will be greatly reduced. Monitoring of the day tanks etc should be monitored as part of the daily checks, insuring there is always chemical available as well as being able to monitor usage.
- Pool circulation rates can be reduced. In most pools these days this can be done by adjusting VSD or reducing the amount of duty pumps running. It would be advised that the circulation rate should be slowed no more than 50% of the design flow. It must be noted that to do this accurately sites will need to be equipped with functioning flowmeters. If no flow meters are installed, it would be advised to air on the side of caution, reducing duty slightly & monitoring the water of the coming days & weeks.

With the adjustments above put in place, it is important to ensure regular checking of the systems are carried out. This not only goes for the pools but areas of a leisure centres operation. As above, leisure centres plant services are not used to being totally shutdown and we would advise daily checks are being carried out.

Daily pool checks.

The following we advise are carried out every day and notes recorded in a logbook. This logbook will act as communication between the persons carrying out the daily checks.

- Carry out routine pool test, including free and combined chlorine along with pH testing.
- Calibration of pool dosing controller is required.

- Check chemical levels in the day tanks.
- Checking the pool water temperature. From this result the air temperature set point can be adjusted.
- Pool circulation checks, including pumps & pipework are free from leaks, filter pressure & flow meter information record. Release any air from filters.
- Visually check the swimming pool, insuring there are no signs of algae forming in dead spots. If the pool uses a manual top up system, in sure the water level is correct.
- Backwashing, if is commonplace that weekly backwashing is carried out. We would advise this is unlikely to be necessary, we would advise sites to carryout backwashing monthly or as and when dictated by filter pressures.

Weekly checks.

In additional to the above the following would be advised weekly.

- Rotate any duty and standby pumps. If you would normally run with two circulation pumps and you have decided to only run one, these should be rotated each week.
- The above goes for any pump in the building, be it pool circulation or domestic heating.
- If a pool cover is installed it should be removed to allow the pool tank to be inspected.

Other options.

If it was deemed that the pool systems should be shutdown completely (although not our advised option) but we understand that it may be the preference of some where keeping costs down is important.

Stopping circulation, as a minimum we would recommend the PWTAG advise outlined in the following.

- Turn off and isolate automatic dosing controllers
- Super chlorinate to 20mg/l at pH 7.2 – 7.4
- Allow to circulate for two turn overs.
- Switch off pool circulation.
- Shutdown water and air heating.
- Look at the possible use of sump pumps to circulate pool water within the pool tank
- It would be JAK's advise to circulate pool via the circulation pumps once per week. This could be carried out for 1 – 2 complete turnovers.

Other factors.

With pools normally being open everyday it is worth remembering additional arrangements will need to be made for normally routine events.

An example of these that can be relating to the pools are, monthly microbiological testing and routine pool plant servicing. It would be advised were possible to continue as normal with these processes. In the event of the notice coming that pools can reopen if things have not been maintained you don't want to left with additional down time, while awaiting a microbiological test result or a questionable dosing pump to be repaired etc.

Another point to think about, do you have an upcoming major works planned, or anything that would normally interfere with the operation of the pools. A good example of these would be any quoted works in the pipeline that initially involved night works to avoid pool closures, it could be the case that these works could now be carried out during normal working hours. Other more routine works include balance tank inspection or cleans, filter inspections or even works that were not planned yet but had been talked about at a management level.

Finally, at JAK we aim to stay open whilst we can, while following all government advise. If you require our services for anything feel free to give us a call, be it for some phone support or needing us to come and look at any issues.

If it is the case that you are one of our service customers, we will be in contact shortly to arrange attendance if due within the next 2 – 3 months.

Finally, we have several sites that have requested a visit to carry out shutdowns as outlined above, if this is something you would like support on again fee free to get in touch.

Chemical supplies.

If you are a chemical customer of JAK, at the time of this letter we are currently experiencing NO delivery issues caused by the coronavirus. This may change in the future. However, we will endeavor to do all we can to keep our customers supplied. It would be our advice to ensure stock levels are kept and maintained.

