



FALL POOL CARE

As the weather turns cooler, the regimen for taking care of your pool changes as well. Use this guide to help you prepare for eventual closing.

When to close is often the first question our clients ask. Purewater recommends waiting a while. First and most obvious, your pool represents a huge investment in backyard fun. Even when September starts out a little cool, there are usually a few good swimming weekends left on the calendar. May as well keep the pool ready to enjoy! Naturally a heater and a good solar blanket will make this easier. Practically speaking, the longer your pool can keep circulating the better in terms of winter condition and eventually, your spring opening.

Also consider the look of the yard. A closed pool is a bit of an eyesore, so why not keep that nice summer look as long as you can? What we frequently see when pools are closed very early is that the water has a chance to turn; warm water without circulation and chlorination is very inviting to algae, which can set in and “ferment” over the winter, so the pool is a mess when you open in spring. Waiting until the water cools down to 14 degrees Celsius or so, with the pool still circulating, helps to ensure the pool has a better chance of being easy to open in spring.

With the pool used less frequently, shorter hours of sunlight, and generally cooler air and water temperatures, you can safely cut back on chemicals and hours of circulation. If you have a variable speed pump, feel free to cut back on circulation time or speed. Using less chemical and power means keeping the pool running for a few extra weeks doesn't need to cost a lot of money. Do keep in

mind that salt systems do not operate well in cool weather; when the water dips below 20 degrees celcius it's time to drop a couple of pucks into the skimmer.

The biggest “pain in the rear” in fall is usually the extra airborne debris that gets into the pool. When the leaves start to fall, particularly with an inground pool, it seems like all of them head right to the pool. There are a few things that can help.

Covering the pool can make a big difference. A solar blanket is not the right way to keep leaves out. We suggest the aptly-named leaf net. These lightweight covers are easy to pop on and off, and when stretched tight, keep almost all of the leaf debris out of the pool. If you are heating the pool, by all means leave the solar blanket on under the leaf net! A safety cover, though a little more expensive, provides the same benefit.

Simply keeping the pump running helps as well. If the water is circulating a lot of the debris will be automatically scooped into the skimmer basket before it gets waterlogged and sinks to the bottom. Be sure to check your skimmer basket daily in fall as it doesn't take long for it to fill up!

Fall is a great time to have an automatic or robotic cleaner working for you. As with the skimmer, they can fill up fast so do check your debris traps more regularly to ensure nothing gets clogged or jammed.

Water testing in fall is still important; be sure to visit the store a couple of times over the fall for your free tests, and be sure, even if you are not swimming to do a weekly drop or strip test in your own backyard. When you are finally ready to close, bring a sample to the store for analysis and be sure to let our staff know you plan to winterize the pool, as our testing procedure is a little different when the pool is about to be shut down.

Enjoy the fall, and enjoy those last few chances to take a dip until next spring.