



Safety Break

During the swim season, the lifeguard will call a ten minute break every hour. Why, you may ask? The following are several reasons.

Number one, swimmers need a break. All swimmers, but especially kids need reminding of when to rest so their stomachs don't get too upset from ingestion of water and from vigorous activity. Too much chlorinated water in the bloodstream can cause "hyponatremia". The body protects itself from rapid water intake or hyponatremia by vomiting. Obviously, Kids need a break to also be reminded to go to the restroom. This can prevent accidents in the water!

Secondly, especially at the beginning of the summer, kids and adult's feet are tender and can be rubbed raw from too much contact with the abrasive plaster finish on the pool. The longer a person is in the water, the softer the toes and feet become, thus making the skin more easily scraped.

Last but not least the lifeguards may have many duties to perform, and often times these are accomplished during the ten minute breaks. Those duties include testing the water, taking headcounts, filling out paperwork, cleaning filters, brushing walls, etc. The lifeguard may also take this break time to cool off in the water, get a drink, eat lunch, and practice CPR and emergency skills.

In 2017, Safety Breaks were initiated for ABP facilities as well as many area pools. Safety Breaks will include both children and adults exiting the pool for ten minutes each hour. This inclusion of adults in the ten-minute Safety Break brings your community into compliance with the Fair Housing Act. There are sections of this Act that stipulate how swim time can be organized, and organizing swim times and excluding certain age groups are not allowed. It also meets insurance requirements of lifeguards being on full duty any time swimmers are in the pool, whether it be children or adults.

Finally, there are certain circumstances that CAN effect the timing and specifics of the ten-minute break. We have listed some of those possibilities here, but please remember lifeguards have the final discretion.

- High head counts at a two guard pools: If both lifeguards have been in the lifeguard stand through two 50-minute period, lifeguards will call a safety break where all residents must exit the pool to allow the lifeguards adequate time off the stand.
- Weather: If the pool has been opened after weather closure within thirty minutes of an safety break, we ask the lifeguards don't call safety break that hour.