

Pool Water Too Warm?

Traditionally one of the solutions to dealing with the heat is the cool enjoyment that a swimming pool can provide. That has not been the case as of lately. Pool water can get very warm during the peak summer months. Couple this with the popularity of a dark pool surface. Many pool owners are experiencing water temperatures that are uncomfortable to swim in because the water is too warm.

What is the desired temperature for swimmers? Most swimmers like water in the range of 80-90 degrees, with temperatures below 80 and above 90 being considered uncomfortable. With the water temperatures in many full-sun pools now reaching mid 90's, pool owners are looking for ways to lower the temperature of the water.

Following are some methods that have been used to lower the temperature of their pool water:

Fountains & waterfalls—

Fountains and waterfalls lower the water temperature. As the water action that is created by fountains and waterfalls causes evaporation, the pool water becomes cooler. This also tends to cause more water loss due to the evaporation process. Operating the fountain or waterfall at night is most effective as the air temperature is cooler. If your pool is not equipped with a fountain or waterfall, aftermarket fountains are available that attach to the swimming pool returns.

Ice— Ice can also be used to cool a pool, but it is not really a practical method of cooling down the water temperature. It takes an excessive amount of ice and the change is only temporary. According to an article in the Wall Street Journal, it would take 8,750 lbs of ice to lower the water temperature of a 20,000 gallon pool by ten degrees. These numbers are fairly consistent with research done by Mythbusters—so you can see that ice is not a sensible method of cooling the water

Drain & refill—A partial drain and refill of your pool water is another option, depending on your water source. This method definitely works, especially if your water source is coming from a well (well water is typically much cooler than surface water). Denton and most other large municipalities in the north Texas area depend on surface water (lake water) as opposed to well water. Most water sources for pools outside of these municipalities are well water, making this option something to consider. One factor to consider before implementing this strategy is that you will have to rebalance your water chemistry, which could result in additional costs.

Shade the pool—Although it will not help you this year, consider planting some trees around the pool, especially on the west side. But remember, if you choose deciduous trees, you will be cleaning leaves out of the pool in the fall.

Reversible heat pumps—Reversible heat pumps will either heat or cool pool water with the flip of a switch. Although they are fairly expensive and consume a considerable amount of power to operate, they are effective when it comes to cooling pool water.

Evaporative coolers—Evaporative coolers use evaporation to lower the temperature of your pool water. They are considerably less costly to purchase and operate than a heat pump, but they are not capable of being used as a heater in the winter as a heat pump is.

As you can see, there are quite a few options available for lowering the temperature of your pool water, some more practical than others.

Another consideration as we continue through increasingly hot summers, is that this hot weather can create problems for swimming pools, even when a routine swimming pool maintenance program is followed. The two biggest problems that we are seeing are:

Not testing and treating the pool water on a regular basis—Proper water chemistry is always important, but when we are experiencing excess heat, there is little room for error. Test and treat your pool water on a regular basis to prevent problems like algae and cloudy water.

Inadequate pump run times-

During the winter, pump run times are not as critical as they are in the summer. Although all pools are different, most residential pool pumps should be running at least 8-12 hours per day. Remember, if you have a salt chlorination system, the system is not producing chlorine unless your pump is operating.

Using proven methods to keep your pool water cool and paying attention to routine pool maintenance will assure that you enjoy your pool throughout “the great heat wave of 2015”!



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