

Regulation and Inspection of Water Slide Receiving Basins and Similar Forms of Wet Recreation

A resolution adopted at the 1992 OPHA Annual General Meeting

Code: 1992-09 (RES) **Status:** Active

WHEREAS in recent years there has been a tremendous increase in the number of water theme parks and a growing public health concern over the use of receiving basins for activities such as water slides. Epidemiological evidence is clear that recreational activities that involve body contact with water present a significant public health risk to bathers, particularly children, if they are not properly operated and maintained. Health hazards associated with water slides, catchment or receiving basins include ear, eyes, nose, throat and skin infections, urinary tract infections, safety hazards associated with water intake inlets and bather collisions.

It is well recognized in Ontario by public health professionals that regulations and guidelines for inspection, sanitation, disinfection are absolutely necessary for protection of public health. There are currently no public health regulations in Ontario concerning water quality, sanitation, disinfection, operation, and inspection of water slides.

The Ontario Regulation 381/84, Health Protection and Promotion Act (Public Pools) exempts receiving basins at the bottom of water slides.

Currently the Amusement Devices Act Regulation 342/87 administered by the Ministry of Consumer and Commercial Relations outlines mainly the requirements for original construction and physical and structural maintenance of water slides.

The Ontario Ministry of Health Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines under the Water Quality Program Standards require the boards of health to ensure that water used for specified recreational purposes meet Ministry of Health guidelines/protocols as applicable and boards must ensure the availability of educational programs regarding health related operational procedures applicable to public bathing beaches, public spas, public swimming pools, public wading pools, and public water slides. Currently, no protocols or guidelines for public water slides exist. If a health unit chooses to be concerned with water slides, section 13 of the H.P.P.A. is the only legal authority to deal with sanitation, operation, water chemistry, maintenance and safety of water slides and their catch basins. This authority is totally inadequate for this purpose.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT OPHA advocate to the Ministry of Health to take legislative measures in creating regulations and/or guidelines to ensure that public health inspectors have standards governing sanitation, operation, inspection, safety, disinfection, and maintenance of water slides and similar wet recreation facilities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT OPHA request the Ministry of Health to amend Regulation 381/84 (Public Pools) to include receiving basins and other like forms of wet recreation.

Regarding resolutions, position papers and motions:

Status: Policy statements (resolutions, position papers and motions) are categorized as:

ACTIVE, if:

1. The activities outlined in the policy statement's implementation plan have not yet been completed; or
2. The policy statement addresses an issue that is currently relevant to public health in Ontario.

ARCHIVED, if:

1. The activities outlined in the policy statement's implementation plan have been completed; or
2. The policy statement addresses an issue that is not currently relevant to public health in Ontario or is not based upon the most current evidence. The statement remains the position of the OPHA until a new statement is adopted that effectively reverses or essentially negates all or major elements of an earlier statement. In this instance, the former supersedes the latter

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