March 19, 2020

To Whom it May Concern:

As a Nation, we are all working together to combat the rapid transmission of the coronavirus (COVID-19). All levels of government are taking action to mitigate the spread of the disease and in some areas drastic steps have been taken including shutting down businesses that are deemed as non-essential. I’m reaching out to you today to make sure you are aware of why the service of pools and spas is essential to both public and personal health, why it is important to allow the completion of open construction projects involving pools, and how companies can continue to provide these critical services while following CDC guidelines to minimize the spread of COVID-19.

The Northeast Spa and Pool Association represents businesses in Connecticut, New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and all these states have enacted similar restrictions on the operation of non-essential businesses. Many parts of the country have begun to take further steps to limit business operations while considering how best to ensure the overall safety of their communities. In San Francisco, for example, their executive order limiting business operations provides for exemptions for “Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other service providers who provide services that are necessary to maintaining the safety, sanitation, and essential operation of residences, Essential Activities, and Essential Businesses”.

While we respect the need for government to take necessary actions to protect the public at this time, there must be consideration given to how to maintain all aspects of the community’s health. I strongly urge you to consider certain pool and spa services as essential for the following reasons:

**Open, Untreated Water Is Unsafe**

Untreated, unfiltered and uncirculated bodies of water allow for the growth and development of a variety of pathogens, as well as mosquito and other insect activity. Residential and outdoor recreational pools should still be maintained at least to a minimum standard. West Nile and
other diseases that have been a problem over the years could reappear at a time when we are already in the middle of public health crisis and the healthcare system is taxed. If water is not properly maintained, a swimming pool or spa can become a health risk for the homeowner as well as the public at large. Consistent management of water chemistry and sanitation is essential. During the current public health crisis with COVID-19, it is important to continue to be vigilant with water sanitation to minimize the risk of additional public health concerns.

**CDC Supports Good Sanitation Prevents Disease Spread**

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) continues to report that there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans using pools and hot tubs. Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (e.g., with chlorine and bromine) of pools and hot tubs should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19. If people are going to use their pools, it is essential that they are maintained properly.

**Keeping Residential Construction Sites Safe**

Making sure active construction sites are safe is also critical. Leaving unfinished projects exposed to the elements could create long-term financial burdens for homeowners as well as pose safety risks for residents and their communities. In the case of inground pool construction, extended work stoppages could result in cave-ins which creates a variety of complications. Additionally, open water from rain or other elements form in incomplete pool shells or open holes will result in public health concerns as outlined above. It is essential that current construction move forward to minimize these safety concerns. Key to this process is an operating inspections process at the state, local and county levels. Code inspectors provide an essential service to the communities that they work in each day. These inspections and construction work can be completed while following social distancing and other CDC recommendations.

**Drowning Prevention**

Maintaining water clarity in a swimming pool is also a critical layer of protection in preventing accidental drowning. Murky waters can hinder the identification and rescue of children as well as adults who are drowning. Additionally, swimming pool service providers can advise homeowners and commercial facility managers on the maintenance of mandated safety requirements around swimming pools including fencing, alarms and other layers of protection.
A Social Distance Service That Helps Without Hurting

Pool service professionals often work alone or in pairs and can complete their jobs without physical interactions with homeowners or commercial pool managers. Pool construction teams also work in small groups well below any current recommendations and perform their work in open air environments without interaction with property owners or managers.

The pool and spa industry stands with the rest of the business community in wanting to slow the spread of COVID-19, and we will play our part to lessen this crisis. We strongly feel that some of the services we provide are essential to the health of the community and we urge you to consider the same so our professionals can continue to provide these valuable service as we battle the Coronavirus.

Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at 609.689.9111 for more information or to discuss how we can work together to create a solution that is best for our community.

Thank you,

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