



Following are guidelines for pool owners and operators in dealing with the occurrence of an earthquake affecting your pool.

**During the shock waves of an earthquake, swimmers in the pool should not evacuate the pool.**

- Instruct swimmers to move to waist-deep water.
- Have swimmers with a group of people, away from walls and stairs until waves subside.
- Ensure patrons are not beneath hanging equipment/décor or light fixtures.
- When shock waves have subsided, continue with facility earthquake evacuation procedures.

**Patrons on deck should be instructed to:**

- Move away from glass windows, outside doors and walls.
- “Drop to the ground and cover your head and neck.”
- If on diving or slide tower, “Drop to the ground and hold on – Do not attempt to climb down.”

**Lifeguards & instructors on deck should be instructed to:**

- Stand away from the pool edge where the waves are crashing
- Move away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls
- Ensure you are not standing beneath hanging equipment/décor or light fixtures.
- Drop to the ground, cover head and neck until the shaking stops while trying to keep an eye on patrons still in the pool.

**Aquatic instructors in the water should be instructed to:**

- If in the water with children, move to waist-deep water
- Create a huddle with students, away from walls and stairs until waves subside

**Rationale:**

- BC is considered a high-risk earthquake zone.
- Common practice in swimming pool safety plans is to evacuate the pool during an earthquake.
- Learnings from the 2010 earthquake in New Zealand reveal that:
  - Evacuation of the pool during the earthquake caused injuries due to the strength of moving water hitting the sides of the pool and waves overflowing onto the walkways making the ground unsteady and difficult to maintain balance. [Swim New Zealand article](#).

**Implementation:**

- Edit current Pool Safety Plan to include this information.
- Distribute an inter-staff memo concerning the change in procedure.
- Post the full earthquake evacuation procedure for swimming pool and adjacent spaces.
- Train staff in earthquake evacuation procedure for swimming pool and adjacent spaces.

For questions or further information, contact Dale Miller, Executive Director,  
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