

UNDERWATER SEAT BENCH

Variance Criteria

1. Underwater seat benches shall only be allowed areas of the pool that are less than five feet deep.
2. Underwater seats shall not project into swim lanes.
3. The minimum and maximum water depth over the bench seat shall be 6 inches and 20 inches respectively.
4. Underwater seat benches shall have a seat depth of 14 to 18 inches projecting from the pool wall to the front edge of the seat or may be recessed from the main body of the pool a maximum of 36 inches. If recessed, the seat bench shall be a maximum of 18 inches wide with the remaining space for leg room.
5. A permanent colored band of dark, contrasting and slip-resistant tile shall be installed at the front edge of the seat extending two inches on the horizontal and vertical surface. The stripe shall be plainly visible to persons on the pool deck. Vinyl liner, stainless steel, and fiberglass pools may use other material for the bench edge marking provided the material is permanently secured, dark in color, non-fading, and slip resistant.
6. The underwater seat bench's front edge shall be rounded and have a minimum radius of one inch.
7. Underwater seats and benches shall not be used as the required entry/exit access unless they are in conjunction with pool steps.
8. If the underwater seat bench is constructed in conjunction with pool steps then a handrail must be installed in compliance with such requirements as required in the LAC Title 51 Part XXIV (Swimming Pools).



State of Louisiana
Department of Health and Hospitals
Office of the Secretary

October 19, 2009

Glenn T. Cambre, Director
Center for Environmental Health Services
Office of Public Health
Department of Health and Hospitals
628 N. 4th Street
P.O. Box 4489
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70821-4489

Re: Letter of Intent/Clarification – Sunning or Tanning Shelves for Public Pools

Dear Mr. Cambre:

It has recently come to my attention that Part XXIV (Swimming Pools and Natural or Semi-Artificial Swimming or Bathing Places) of the Louisiana State Sanitary Code (LAC 51) does not specifically allow sunning or tanning shelves for use in swimming pools but that Section 311.A of this Part does allow water depths less than 3 feet with the prior written permission of the state health officer. So, in reference to this section it is my intent to allow sunning or tanning shelves only when the following requirements are strictly met.

1. Definitions

Sunning or Tanning Shelf— an extended area of the pool with a nearly level floor located outside of the normal internal pool structure (*i.e.*, outside of the minimum 3 feet deep shallow end of the pool) that is intended for bathers to sit or lie down in a minimum 6” to maximum 10” depth of pool water for sunning or tanning purposes. This area is not intended for wading.

2. Sunning or tanning shelves shall be constructed entirely outside of the normal location of the internal wall at the shallow end of a pool; however, the pool wall shall be extended to encompass the entire area of the sunning or tanning shelf. No extensions, or the leading edge of the sunning or tanning shelf, shall extend beyond the vertical plane of any portion of the pool wall.
3. Sunning or tanning shelves shall be recessed a minimum of 36” back from the normal location of the internal wall at the shallow end of a pool and shall be a minimum of five feet wide. In no case shall any sunning or tanning shelf be less than 15 square feet in total horizontal surface area.
4. The normal operating water depth within all parts of the sunning or tanning shelf area shall be a minimum of 6” with a maximum of 10”.
5. A deck surface constructed in compliance with Part XXIV of the Louisiana State Sanitary Code (LAC 51:XIV) shall completely surround the sunning or tanning shelf except for the sunning or tanning shelf's edge where it meets the minimum 3 feet deep shallow end of the pool. The distance from the surface of the deck to any point on the surface of the sunning or tanning shelf shall be a maximum of twelve inches (12”).

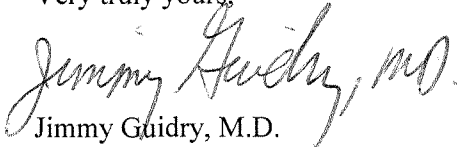
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Re: Letter of Intent/Clarification – Sunning / Tanning Shelf

6. A permanent colored band of dark, contrasting and slip-resistant tile shall be installed at the intersection or edge of the pool wall (where it meets the minimum 3 feet deep shallow end of the pool) and the sunning or tanning shelf. Such contrasting tile must extend at least 2" on both the horizontal and vertical surfaces from the intersection or edge of where they meet.
7. The sunning or tanning shelf's edge shall be rounded and have a minimum radius of one inch.
8. A minimum of one submerged inlet shall be provided in all sunning or tanning shelves. This one submerged inlet shall be adequate for sunning and tanning shelves consisting of 100 square feet or less. For sunning or tanning shelves greater than 100 square feet, additional submerged inlets shall be provided at a rate of one per 100 square feet, or any fraction thereof, of the sunning or tanning shelf surface area. The inlet(s) shall be centrally located and installed into the pool's circulation system.
9. A minimum of one skimmer per 200 square feet or any fraction thereof, of the sunning or tanning shelf surface area, shall be properly located, installed and connected with the pool's circulation system.
10. The surface of all sunning or tanning shelves shall be fully self-draining with a maximum slope of one foot vertical per twelve feet horizontal, and shall comply with all other pool surface requirements of LAC Title 51 Part XXIV (Swimming Pools).
11. All sunning or tanning shelves shall be installed at the most shallow portion of the pool but shall, in no case connect with or be adjacent to water depths greater than 4 feet.
12. Depth markers shall be provided as required in LAC 51:XXIV.701.
13. If the sunning or tanning shelf is constructed as part of ingress, such as steps into the pool, then a handrail must be installed in compliance with such requirements as required in the LAC Title 51 Part XXIV (Swimming Pools).
14. Interactive play devices shall not be installed in any sunning or tanning area.

Please ensure that copies of this letter are circulated to your staff and others as appropriate. Should questions arise, they should be directed to Mr. Jake Causey, P.E., Engineering Services Section, Center for Environmental Health Services, Office of Public Health. Mr. Causey may be reached at (225) 342-7499.

Very truly yours,


Jimmy Guidry, M.D.
State Health Officer

JG/SGB/JKC/jkc

cc: Karen Irion, Chief Engineer, Engineering Services Section, CEHS, OPH
Jake Causey, Engineer, Engineering Services Section, CEHS, OPH
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