



Ohio Administrative Code

Rule 901:9-1-13 Safety standards for wave pools.

Effective: December 9, 2021

(A) Entry to the water shall be permitted only at the zero depth entry of the pool.

(B) The wave pool shall be fenced from the wave-generating machinery along the sides of the pool to the point of zero static water depth. Fencing shall only be open at points of exit from the pool. Fencing may be no closer than eighteen inches from the pool, with the exception of high-wave pools, and the public will not be permitted between the fencing and the edge of the pool. The pool is to be fenced on all sides except at the point of zero static water depth or where the position of wave-generating equipment makes it unnecessary to fence to prevent public access to the water. Patrons shall be protected from the elevated leading edge hazards that may exist along the side walls and back walls of the wave pool through the use of fencing/acceptable barriers. Fencing/acceptable barriers shall be installed to prohibit patron access to the leading edges on the elevated sides and rear of the wave pool. Fencing and/or acceptable barriers shall comply with ASTM volume 15.07, 2007 edition, "Design and Manufacture of a Patron Directed Artificial Climbing Walls, Dry Slides, Coin Operated and Purposeful Water Immersion Amusement Rides and Devices and Air-Supported Structures." The fence will come to the water's edge at zero static water depth. Employee access gates in perimeter fences must be secured with a latch and a sign must be posted stating "authorized personnel only".

(C) Life vests will be available to the public without additional charge. A refundable deposit may be collected. Signs encouraging the use of the vests will be placed conspicuously near the entrance to the pool.

(D) All wave pools must have minimum rest periods within each hour of operation according to the following formula:

(1) High-wave pools cannot be operated more than sixty minutes without a minimum five-minute rest period. A "rest period" is defined as nonoperation of wave-generating equipment.



(2) Action pools cannot be operated more than fifteen minutes without a minimum five-minute rest period. A "rest period" is defined as nonoperation of wave-generating equipment.

(E) Lifeguards must be assigned to guard wave pools at a minimum standard of one lifeguard per two thousand square feet of water surface area over thirty-six inches static water depth available for use to patrons as a minimum, and at times of high pool population, a minimum standard of the 10/20 rule will be in effect. A lifeguard staffing program shall be established by the owner. Such plan shall be submitted to the department for approval as part of the request for licensing. Owners should also have available for inspection their plan for high-pool population density lifeguard assignments.

(F) Children under forty-eight inches in height, not accompanied by an adult, must wear a life vest or pass a swimming test in order to gain access to a wave pool. Signs indicating this requirement should appear at the ticket booth/entrance gate to the park.

(G) All steps and ladders should be recessed such that the outer edge is flush with the vertical wall. Handrails and steps should extend down the pool wall in such a way so that they will be easily accessible at the lowest water level during wave action. It is recommended that the area between the handrail and the vertical wall be enclosed but in no case should the distance between the handrail and vertical wall exceed five inches. Existing construction and construction in progress as of the effective date of this rule is exempted.

(H) Handholds should be installed twelve to fifteen inches above the static water level. They shall be installed so that the outer edge is flush with the vertical wall. Handholds are not required in the areas of wave pools where the static water level is less than or equal to forty-two inches. Handholds shall be constructed such that they are self-draining and so that there are no gaps between the handholds and the pool wall. All handholds should run in the same direction as the wave action. Existing construction and construction in progress as of the effective date of this rule is exempted.

(I) Patrons shall be protected from the wave generation area by a physical barrier or a zone not available to patrons with appropriate signage alerting patrons to the hazards of approaching the wave-generating equipment. Physical barriers shall be inspected daily.



(J) The surface of all wave pools at the shallow entry end shall be such as to provide a slip-resistant surface starting not less than four feet above the water line and including all areas that are wet due to wave action. The slip-resistant area will extend into the pool to a pool depth of not less than three feet.

(K) Only flotation devices authorized by the owner of the wave pool shall be allowed in the pool, including personal flotation devices. All flotation devices shall be such as to preclude injury should wave action cause contact between the flotation device and patron (user or other). Exceptions to this requirement may be made for special events where participation is controlled and for special flotation devices required for handicapped individuals as approved by the park management.

(L) In all cases where wave action is suspended for any reason, an audible signal shall be used to signal warning of the impending resumption of wave action. In those high-wave pools where significant intervals exist between waves, such signal shall sound at least thirty seconds prior to wave action.

(M) Safety equipment shall include one United States coast guard approved type IV personal flotation device (ring buoy or equivalent) per lifeguard station and one spine board with straps per pool. Lifeguards will have rescue tubes ready for use at all times when on duty or rotating stations.

(N) Permanent lifeguard stations shall be distributed in such a fashion that all pool areas are covered in order to facilitate the lifeguard staffing program stated in paragraph (E) of this rule. A permanently installed clearly labeled kill switch shall be located at each permanent lifeguard station. All lifeguards will have immediate access to all safety equipment.