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Pool Tip #59:

Safe Pool Chemical Storage Practices

If you store or use hazardous chemicals at your pool site, you are vulnerable to accidents which can lead to injury, death, downtime, elevated maintenance costs, bad PR, and loss of customer confidence. Accidents and releases of hazardous materials into the environment are preventable. All pools should develop a Chemical Safety Management Plan. Start by taking inventory of the hazardous materials on site. List the chemicals, their quantity and where and how they are stored.

Determine what can go wrong by using the “What if...?” hazard analysis method. For example: What if someone mixed the muriatic acid and sodium hypochlorite? What if a child picked up a trichlor tablet and bit into it, thinking it was candy? What if a contaminated barrel of calcium hypochlorite exploded then started a fire?

Assess the likelihood of accidents, and evaluate potential consequences of accidents if they occur. Establish a preventative maintenance program and standard operating procedures for handling chemicals. Gather MSDS sheets, provide MSDS stations and train staff on the information provided on the chemical labels and in the MSDS sheets. Properly label all hazardous materials. Implement employee training and retraining programs. Develop an emergency response plan and practice emergency procedures. Document and investigate accidents if they occur.

Safe Chemical Storage

- Do not allow children to handle pool chemicals
- Don't smoke near pool chemicals
- Store chemicals in a cool, dry, well ventilated area
- Separate incompatible chemicals
- Keep pool chemicals away from flammable products
- (paints, solvents, soaps, detergents, fertilizers, pesticides, oils, fuels, acids...)
- Store chemicals on pallets or shelves, not on the floor
- Follow chemical manufacturer's stacking procedures and storage guidelines
- Store liquid chemicals below solid chemicals
- Keep the chemical storage area clean
- Inspect chemical containers regularly

- Use chemicals on a first in, first out basis
- Wear appropriate protective gear when handling chemicals (eye, skin, and respiratory protection)