



WATER TEST RESULTS EXPLAINED

TOTAL ALKALINITY

This is a measure of bicarbonates and carbonates in your water and is usually recorded as parts per million (PPM). The total alkalinity of your pool water can be thought of as a pH shock absorber and is often referred to as a pH buffer due to the way it helps your pool resist changes in pH. Maintaining the correct Total Alkalinity results in a more stable pool environment.

pH

This is a measure of how acidic or alkaline your pool water is. Maintaining your pool pH within a range of 7.2 to 7.6 will allow the pool chemicals to sanitise the pool more effectively. Also, your skin has a natural pH of 7.4, so water pH above or below the recommended levels can result in dry, itchy skin, sore eyes and pool scaling.

FREE CHLORINE

Free chlorine is the chlorine that is readily available to sanitise your pool water. You may also see combined chlorine which is a 'by-product' of sanitation or 'used up' chlorine. It is this combined chlorine that is responsible for the unpleasant chlorine smells that can irritate your eyes and lungs. TOTAL chlorine is a measure of FREE and COMBINED chlorines in your pool. In a well-balanced and properly managed pool there should be no difference in the readings for FREE and TOTAL chlorine.

SALT

A salt water chlorinator is essentially a chlorine factory which uses salt dissolved in the pool water to manufacture chlorine by the process of electrolysis. It is important that you have the recommended salt levels to get the best chlorine production from your equipment. Salt levels that are "too high" or "too low" can cause damage to your chlorinator so always check your chlorinator manual or get advice from Allan's Pool Shop.

STABILISER

Chlorine stabiliser or simply stabiliser, is a cyanuric acid based product which is used to protect the chlorine in your pool. Cyanuric acid bonds loosely to the chlorine compounds to reduce the effect of UV and heat which would otherwise degrade the chlorine. Unfortunately, stabilizer is an inhibitor which impacts on the reactivity of chlorine. Maintaining the correct level of stabiliser is very important as "too little" will allow sunlight to quickly break down your chlorine whilst "too much" will hinder the chlorine making it "lazy".

CALCIUM HARDNESS

Water feeds from its surroundings drawing minerals and trace elements out of the surface that it comes into contact with. When calcium levels are "too low" the water will feed aggressively, deteriorating pool surfaces. In this state, the water is said to be 'corrosive'. Too "high" calcium levels can result in calcium depositing out of solution. This condition is referred to as 'scale forming'. Calcium hardness acts as a regulator which, when added to the pool water, helps create a state of balance where the water is neither corrosive nor scale forming.

PHOSPHATES

Phosphates are compounds containing phosphorus which is one of the key elements necessary for the growth of algae and microbes. Phosphates occur naturally in living and decaying plants, animal matter, sediments and soils. They can also be found in laundry and cleaning products. Once in pool water, phosphates will encourage the growth of algae increasing the risk of a green pool and preventing other chemicals working effectively.

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