

Trained Pool Operators considered Necessary to Ensure Essential Operations

Trained pool operators (TPO) conduct disinfection, maintenance and associated preoperational start up activities for pools throughout the state. These individuals routinely work alone or in very small groups (1-2 ppl) to get pools up and running. TPOs are required at all New Jersey Public Recreational Bathing (PRB) facilities with pools and hot tubs pursuant N.J.A.C. 8:26-5.2(c) to supervise the maintenance and mechanical operation of a swimming pool. As we have seen a steady increase in outdoor temperatures, a concern that outdoor pools statewide may unintentionally become habitat for mosquito colonies increasing the risk and proliferation of mosquito borne diseases like Zika, West Nile and similar. Mosquito-borne diseases are those spread by the bite of an infected mosquito.

Executive Order 107 requires all NJ residents remain at home unless reporting to or performing a job, encourages social distancing when telework is not feasible, and provides that janitorial and custodial staff are examples of employees who need to be physically present at their work site in order to perform their duties. The Public Rec Bathing project considers and will communicate to LHA that TPO's are necessary to ensure essential operations because they perform maintenance and custodial activities required to maintain public health. The TPO **will not have the authority** to open pools for use by the public and will **be required pursuant Executive Order 122 to develop standard operating procedures and policies of social distancing while workers mitigate the risk of concern**. Pursuant to Executive Order 107 PRB facilities are clearly places of public amusement intended to remain closed to the public, similar to water parks, which are mentioned specifically.

For further information or questions, please contact the PRB project at PRB@doh.nj.gov.