

Common pool water problems

Cloudy Water

All of a sudden, your clear blue water appears milky or cloudy. This may be due to a number of possible water imbalances. The good news is that most are easy to diagnose with a simple water test kit. Begin by testing your alkalinity and pH levels. If they come out off kilter, adjust your chemicals appropriately. Cloudy water can also be caused by **poor circulation**, which indicates your filter is not running for enough hours in the day to clean your water properly. Try turning your filter on for longer periods of time - even all day for a while - and see if your water clears. If the cloudiness is caused by **swimmer waste**, such as perspiration and body oils, try shocking your pool using a shock solution.

Algae

When the color of your pool water turns **cloudy green**, it means algae is present in your pool. Algae are not an indication of disease; it is simply a plant that thrives when chlorine levels are not sufficient to control it. Green algae are much easier to get rid of than black or mustard algae. To get rid of green algae, shock your pool and then apply an algaecide to kill off the plants. Dead algae should be removed from your pool as soon as possible. If you have black or mustard algae, you will need to brush the affected areas of your pool well before applying the shock treatment and algaecide. The process will need to be repeated until the algae are completely gone.

Water that Burns the Eyes

When swimmers begin complaining their eyes and throats are burning after swimming in your pool, you probably have an imbalance in pool chemicals. In many cases, the culprit is the **pH level**, so pull out your pool test kit and check the levels in your water. Another common reason for water that burns is too many chloramines in the water. **Chloramines** are chemicals that result when chlorine is bonded with swimmer waste like body oils and perspiration. Solve the problem, shock the pool with a super-chlorinating solution.

If your pool water is not as clear and pretty as it should be, it is important to find the problem as soon as possible and administer a solution. If you cannot diagnose the problem on your own, take a sample of your pool water to a professional testing service or call a professional pool service in to diagnose the problem. The sooner you correct the problem in your pool water, the sooner you and your family can get back to the important task of enjoying your outdoor swimming pool.

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
Water is cloudy or hazy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Poor circulation or filtration - Improper water balance - High Total Dissolved Solids - Excess organic waste - High Total Alkalinity - Low Sanitizer level 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Backwash and clean filter, the filter may need to be chemically cleaned. - Clean skimmer baskets and pump strainer baskets. - Test pH, Total Alkalinity and Calcium Hardness, adjust as necessary. - If the TDS is over range a partial dilution draining is necessary. - Shock pool with one gallon of liquid chlorine for every 10,000 gallons of pool water. - Add muriatic acid - Add chlorine to bring it within proper range.
Water is green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Green algae growth, a free-floating variety which imparts a cloudy green color to the water. It is easy to correct if treated early. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brush the bottoms, sides and tile line of the pool. - Do a double shock on the pool. - Add an algae killer.
Yellow or greenish dust on the floor and walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mustard Algae 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Put all floaties, equipment (poles, brushes, vac hoses etc that have been exposed to algae in pool to soak). - Treat pool with chlorine and appropriate Mustard Algae killer (Banish, Mustard Buster, Algymiacin, Swimtrine).
Black spots on floor and walls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Black algae, a very resistant, hard to kill variety which appears as small, black dots or blotches that are pin-head to quarter sized on the walls and bottom of the pool. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brush the bottoms and sides of pool walls. - Treat pool with black algae killer (Algaetrine).

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
Pink Slime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Form of bacteria with a pinkish center that's surrounded by a flat gelatinous mass. This bacteria can be introduced into the water by someone who has come in contact with it who has swam in a coastal area. - Also a by-product of SoftSwim water care line. - Can be caused by the overuse of some algaecides. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Brush bottoms, sides, around steps, light niches etc. - Increase SoftSwim B & C to appropriate levels in pool. - Apply SoftSwim Assist per dosage chart. - If the pool is on chlorine, double shock the pool. - Discontinue use of Algaecide if slime has been caused by over usage.
Water is sudsy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low pH - Excessive organic wastes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test and balance pH. - Shock pool.
Blonde hair turns green	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Typically a result of copper in the water. This is not due to color treated hair reacting to chlorine. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test water, determine if there is copper present in the water, if so treat with a metal sequestering agent & remove metals from water. - Wash hair with a neutralizing shampoo.
pH is always low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low Total Alkalinity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Test water and add proper amount of Sodium Bicarb to balance Total Alkalinity (pH buffer). Adjust pH to within proper range 7.4-7.6.

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
pH is always high	- High Total Alkalinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reduce the total alkalinity level in the swimming pool by adding muriatic acid (dilute hydrochloric acid) or dry acid (sodium bisulfate). Read directions for application below. - Dilute the acid (sodium bisulfate) in a bucket of water before pouring it into the pool. You can also use liquid muriatic acid. - Pour the solution slowly into the deep end of the pool with the circulation pump turned off. - Wait a few hours before restarting the pump. - Retest the pool water after 24 hours and repeat the procedure until the level is in the correct range, but wait three days between treatments. It may take time for the T.A. level to drop.

Problem	Possible Cause	Solution
Water is clear and appears to be clean but cannot maintain a chlorine residual	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - High usage (bathers), infrequent shocking and no sanitizer - Combined/"locked up" chlorine. - Chlorine demand in filter/pool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Shock pool. If you cannot maintain a proper chlorine level, test water to determine if there is locked up/combined chlorine. - Be sure you have tablets in your feeder. Check to be sure chlorinator is working properly. - Calculate break-point chlorination, treat pool. - Chemically clean filter or change media.
Green Clear water or Brown Clear water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Iron or Copper in fill water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treat with sequestering agent. Follow up with Sparkle Up and clean filter. - Use trucked in water when filling pool.
Black or Clear water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manganese in fill water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Treat with sequestering agent and chlorine.
Strong chlorine odor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Too little Free Available Chlorine in water - Locked up/combined "inactive" chlorine in water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Calculate break-point chlorination and shock pool.