

June 22, 2015

TO: Mayor and Members of City Council

FROM: Harry Black, City Manager,

SUBJECT: POLICY FOR UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH AT CITY POOLS

This item is a follow-up to Council items #201400864 and #201500752 and provides information on the 2015 pool season specifically; the policy for unaccompanied youth in City pools.

Age Restrictions of Unaccompanied Youth

CRC anticipates reduced attendance at city pools because of the current rule requiring anyone under age 11 to be accompanied by a parent, legal guardian, or adult age 18 or older during open swim. The department believes the current rule will hinder the ability for youth to learn how to swim at desired ages. CRC continues to benchmark “best practices” for admittance policies in urban public pool settings.

The CRC recommends the rule changes outlined below. CRC can implement these new admittance policies pending a Law review of parental release documents, and once all supplies and materials are available.

Existing Rules:

- Children age 7 years and younger must be accompanied and actively supervised with touch supervision at all times in groups of three or less by a parent, legal guardian or adult age eighteen or older.
- Children 8 -11 must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, legal guardian, or adult age eighteen or older during open swims hours.
- CRC provides life jackets free of charge and encourages their use for non-swimmers.
- CRC swim lessons are available free of charge for 2015 and children can participate in swim lessons, Guard Start, or swim team programs prior to open swim hours with a signed parental release.

CRC recommends the following rule modifications:

Rule Modifications for 2015:

- Children age 7 years and younger must be accompanied and actively supervised with touch supervision at all times in groups of three or less by a parent, legal guardian, or adult age 18 or older. Parents with more than three children under age six must make arrangements to have another adult assist with supervision.
- Children age 8 must be accompanied and supervised by a parent, legal guardian, or adult age eighteen or older during open swim hours.
- The CRC recommends that children age 9 – 11 be accompanied and supervised by a parent, legal guardian, or adult age 18 or older during open swim; however, CRC will allow children ages 9 – 11, with a signed CRC parental consent form as proof of parental permission, to swim unaccompanied by parent, legal guardian, or adult age 18 or older.

- Children 11 years and younger and the accompanying parent, legal guardian, or adult age 18 or older, will be provided corresponding wrist bands that must be worn while at the facility. These wrist bands are to identify the adult and the children under their responsibility.
- Children 9 – 11 years that have signed permission to swim unaccompanied will be provided a bright color wrist band that they must wear while at the facility. These wrist bands are to identify unaccompanied swimmers.
- Any child 11 years or younger found in the facility without a provided wrist band will not be permitted to stay.
- CRC provides life jackets free of charge and encourages their use for non-swimmers.
- CRC swim lessons are available free of charge for 2015 and children can participate in swim lessons, Guard Start, or swim team programs prior to open swim hours with a signed parental release.

Operational Changes

- CRC has eliminated the practice of “open swim” in the deep end of pools where diving boards are located.

These changes have been formed by previous experience, data collected from similar cities, established industry relationships and information already within CRC’s system.

Data from this season will be collected under active operation hours to determine if additional practices should be incorporated into daily access operations. Any resources necessary would be requested in the next budget cycle. Also, if data suggests we can maintain or increase traditional attendance, and increase the number of youth taking swim lessons and most importantly provide a safe swimming experience than this is good reinforcement information for current policies.

CRC will continue to do everything possible to prevent a reoccurrence of the tragic 2014 accidental drowning.

CRC will report back at the conclusion of the pool season on the data collected and make recommendations if the policy requires further adjustment.