

SPRING ISSUE | MARCH 2023

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The Official Voice for the Alberta Association of Recreation Facility Personnel (RFP)



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Publishing Information

Inside This Issue

President's Report	4
Executive Director's Report	5
AARFP Memberships	6
2022 RFP Course Schedule	7
2022 RFP Course Registration	8
2023 AARFP AGM - We Need Your Help	10
Engaging Children and Youth in Recreation	11
Spring Boulevard Sweeping	12
AARFP Communications & Marketing Coordinator	14
Icicy Business of Mental Health	15
It's Time to Re-Connect in Recreation	16
An Open-Minded Skeptic's Opinion of Air Removal from Skating Ice	18
Aquatic Programming	22
When are Children Ready to Learn to Swim?	24
Furnace Tips 101	27

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Leisure Lines is the official magazine of the Alberta Association of Recreation Facility Personnel, published four times per year. To contribute articles, contact:



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MISSION STATEMENT

Providing education, consultation and advocacy
in Recreation Facility Operations.

VISION

To be leaders in recreation facility operations
contributing to an active Alberta.

VALUES

- **Leadership** - Furthering our level of professionalism, integrity, and respect in the field of Recreation Facility Operations.
- **Fellowship** - Sharing knowledge, providing support and networking opportunities to our members and their communities.
- **Passion** - Passion for what we do and how it contributes to 'Active Living' in a healthier Alberta.
- **Diversity & Inclusion** - Dedicated to creating a safe and inclusive environment that embraces diversity at all levels.

OUR CODE OF ETHICS

Members shall conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the following:

- Act ethically and morally
- Maintain high ideals and integrity in all relationships
- Promote the Mission, Vision, Values and Goals of the Association independently, in groups and with partners
- Follow the Association's by-laws and laws of the land
- Interact with fellow members and invite prospective members
- Refrain from any activity that may disgrace or may be in conflict with the Association or employer
- In all these ways transmit this Association, not lessen but lift it, to greater heights.



We gratefully acknowledge the financial assistance from the lottery funds distributed by the Alberta Recreation and Physical Activity Division.

President's Report



Rob Pelletier – AARFP President – 8675308.rp@gmail.com

Hello friends and colleagues. As you may already know, this is my last post as the AARFP President of this great organization. When I reflect on the past 5 years as president elect and then president, I realize just how much has gone on in the world. I look back and see how hard it has been, and I realize just how important AARFP is. We are an essential industry that people rely and depend upon in tough times, not only for their physical health but their mental health as well. I am glad to have been in this role during the pandemic, and to help steer the organization through all that came with it. You should know that AARFP was back to pre-pandemic numbers for 2022, and in fact, we are set to have a record year in 2023. This is amazing! I have learned a lot working with all of the board members past and present, and I will continue to do so as your past president. I am so proud of us all.

April 23rd – 26th is our 44th annual conference in Red Deer. This will be our last in Red Deer for a while in which we would like to thank the City for their hospitality. We have already started planning for our 45th annual conference in 2024, and have an awesome location planned. It's time to switch it up folks, so, if you are interested in being a host community for an upcoming AARFP conference, please get in touch with the office to pitch your ideas.

You're all great, keep up the good work and see you in April. Take care,

Rob Pelletier

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Executive Director's Report



Chris McKenna – AARFP Executive Director – executivedirector@aarfp.com

I hope you all had a great Fall & Christmas Season. Spring is fast approaching, and with it, is our fantastic conference. It will be held at the Red Deer Resort and Casino on April 23 – 26, 2023. We have put together a great list of sessions with excellent speakers. We will be featuring 3 separate keynote speakers, including Alysia Rissling, an Olympic bobsledder. We will also be bringing back our "Activity Sessions" on Tuesday afternoon. Our annual golf tournament will also be at this time, along with numerous other options. Our trade show, due to construction at the conference hotel, will now be held off-site at the Dawe Centre. We are also bringing back the popular "live auction" of sports memorabilia. This auction will be held after the trade show at our hospitality venue, Bo's Bar & Stage.

We will be looking for nominations for the following AARFP Board positions:

- President Elect
- Education Representative
- Arena Stream Representative
- Parks Stream Representative
- Client Services Stream Representative

Nominations are now open. Please see our new website for further information.

Just to remind everyone, we have moved our office location from Cochrane to Northeast Calgary. Please feel free to drop in at any time with any questions you may have.

Our course schedule for 2023 is looking good, and we hope you have a chance to attend some courses this year.

We have hired a new marketing and communication coordinator, Helena Milovic. She started on February 15th, so be on the lookout for news and updates from her. Our marketing coordinator, Shawntel, has moved to British Columbia, and will be working fulltime with the Recreation Facilities Association of British Columbia. They are lucky to have her, and she will be missed by our entire association. I would like to thank her for all her years of service. She will always be a part of AARFP, and we wish her the best in her new career.

We continue to work with the Recreation Facilities Association of British Columbia (RFABC) and the Recreation Facilities Association of Nova Scotia (RFAN) to collaborate on course delivery. Three representatives from the Nova Scotia Association will be attending our Conference for the first time, so this will be fun.

In closing, I would like to thank our AARFP Board for all their hard work and the staff for doing such a good job.

Chris McKenna
AARFP Executive Director
executivedirector@aarfp.com

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2023 AARFP Memberships

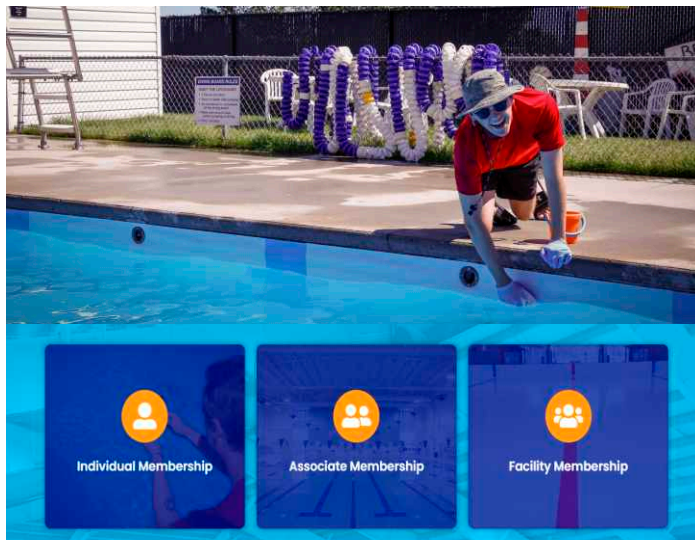


Purchase / Renew Today!

An AARFP Membership has many benefits including free job postings, and exclusive opportunities to attend courses and the annual conference. As a member, you will have your own client portal with access to courses and conference registrations.

Individual Memberships

If you have been a member of AARFP in the past, your portal is ready and waiting for you. At the beginning of January all past members received an email, sent to the email that was on file with us, with their login credentials. You can use this to renew your individual membership for the year. Just go through our website: www.aarfp.com/memberships



Facility And Associate Memberships

We have improved the Facility and Associate membership purchase process. This can all be done online now through the portal with ease. To purchase your Facility or Associate membership for 2023, please go through the website and click on the appropriate membership type.

Facility Memberships: Purchase your membership under the Primary Membership Holder. When the purchase is complete, you will receive an email with instructions to add the 4 additional members. If you are paying with any method other than credit card, be sure to select CHEQUE at the end of your transaction. This will allow you to print your invoice to submit to your payables department.

Associate Memberships: Don't forget to update your company profile to include a description of your products and services and upload your logo to your profile picture. This information will be visible on the Associates page on our website AND in the Associate Directory in the Member Portal.

Looking for membership or course history? We are working with Member365 to ensure that your course and membership history is available for you in your member portal. While we work on that, please do not hesitate to reach out to us. We can send you completed course certificates as you need them.

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2023 Course Schedule



FEBRUARY 2023

February 28 - March 3, 2023

Pool Operator Level 2Lethbridge

MARCH 2023

March 7-9 & 14-16, 2023

Leadership SkillsONLINE

March-20-23

Developing A Policy &
Procedure ManualCalgary - Office

March 23, 2023

Arena Maintenance (O).....Strathmore

March 23 - 24, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1Brooks

March 28 - 29, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1Leduc

APRIL 2023

April 4-5 & 11-12, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1ONLINE

April 11 - 12, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 1.....Rivière Qui Barre

April 13 - 14, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 2.....Rivière Qui Barre

MAY 2023

May 2-3 & 9-10, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1ONLINE

May 3-5, 2023

Leadership SkillsEdson

May-05-23

Life Cycle & Risk Management.....Springbank

May 8-11, 2023

Arena Operator Level 2Three Hills

May 8-11, 2023

Pool Operator Level 2Fairview

May 23-24, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 1Lac La Biche

May 25-26, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 2.....Lac La Biche

May 16 - 17, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1Camrose

May-19-23

Ball Diamond ConstructionAthabasca

JUNE 2023

June 5-6 & 12-13, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1ONLINE

June 13 - 14, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1 ..Calgary\Pinnacle Aquatics

June 26-29, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Leduc

June 5 - 6, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 1Hanna

June 7-8, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 2.....Hanna

June 19 - 20, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 1Millett

June 21 - 22, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 2.....Millett

JULY 2023

July 6-7, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Airdrie

2023 RFP SYMPOSIUM • LACOMBE •

July 17-18, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1Lacombe

July 17-18, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 1Lacombe

July 17-20, 2023

RDP Supervisory SkillsLacombe

July 19 - 20, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 2Lacombe

July 17-19, 2023

Leadership Skills.....Lacombe

July 17-18, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 1Lacombe

July 19 - 20, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 2Lacombe

July 19-22, 2023

Pool Operator Level 2Lacombe

July-20-23

Life Cycle & Risk Management.....Lacombe

July-21-23

Custodial Care.....Lacombe

July-21-23

Developing A Policy &
Procedure Manual.....Lacombe

AUGUST 2023

August 3-4, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Brooks

August 9-10 & 16-17, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1ONLINE

August 10-11, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Fort Saskatchewan

August 14-15, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Okotoks

August 15-18, 2023

Arena Operator Level 2Springbank

August 15-16, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 1Coaldale

August 17-18, 2023

Parks & Sport Fields Level 2Coaldale

SEPTEMBER 2023

September 6-7, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Millett

September 6-7, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Valleyview

September 8, 2023

Arena Maintenance (Z)Rivière Qui Barre

September 11-12, 2023

Arena Operator Level 1Rocky Mountain House

September 11 - 12, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 1Lac La Biche

September 13 - 14, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 2.....Lac La Biche

September 13, 2023

Arena Maintenance (O).....Rocky Mountain House

September 13 - 14, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1Three Hills

September 18-21, 2023

Arena Operator Level 2.....Olds

September-22-23

Custodial CareEdson

OCTOBER 2023

October 3-6, 2023

Arena Operator Level 2Beaumont

October 5 - 6, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1Lethbridge

October 17-18 & 24-25, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1ONLINE

October 16-18, 2023

Leadership Skills.....Calgary - Office

October 16-17, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 1Lethbridge

October 18-19, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 2Lethbridge

October 24-27, 2023

Arena Operator Level 2.....Brooks

NOVEMBER 2023

November 6-7, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 1Calgary - MTC

November 8-9, 2023

Building Maintenance Level 2Calgary - MTC

November 14-16 & 21-23, 2023

Leadership SkillsONLINE

November 14-17, 2023

Pool Operator Level 2Leduc

November 15-16 & 22-23, 2023

Pool Operator Level 1ONLINE

November 24, 2023

Natural Ice.....Lake Louise

***** Please Note for the 2023 RFP Course Schedule *****

Please refer to the website (www.aarfj.com) for the most current schedule of our course offerings. If there are discrepancies between the printed version and the website, the website is correct.

2023 Course Registration



CLASS SIZE:

Maximum of 20 Students

COURSE START TIME:

8:30 a.m.

FINISH TIME:

5:00 p.m. on the last day

NOTE:

* Level 2 will be required to do some after class & evening work.

- Arena Level 1
- Certified Swimming Pool Level 1
- Building Mtce. Level 1
- Building Mtce. Level 2
- Parks & Sport Fields 1
- Parks & Sport Fields 2

\$467.25 (Plus GST)

- Arena Level 2*
- Swimming Pool Level 2*

\$735.00 (Plus GST)

- Leadership Skills

\$551.25 (Plus GST)

- Arena Mtce.
- Lifecycle/Risk Management
- Custodial
- Developing a Policy & Procedure Facility Manual

\$304.50 (Plus GST)

If you are **NOT** a current member, you will need to become one before you can register for a course. Everyone has to have a current Membership to attend an RFP course. This membership provides you with benefits such as access to our quarterly newsletters, and several other online features you can check out at www.aarfp.com!

Membership Rates:

NOTE: ALL MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE DECEMBER 31st.

- Individual: \$105 – (Plus GST)
- Facility: \$441 – (Plus GST)
- Associate: \$341.25 – (Plus GST)

Pro-rated Membership Rates:

AFTER JUNE 30th
ALL MEMBERSHIPS EXPIRE DECEMBER 31st.

- Individual: \$52.50 – (Plus GST)
- Facility: \$220.50 – (Plus GST)
- Associate: \$170.63 – (Plus GST)

Memberships are due at the time of purchase.

PAYMENT OPTIONS: Payment can be made by EFT, credit card, cheque, or with a purchase order.

Payment MUST BE RECEIVED one week prior to the start of the course. Payment will not be accepted at the course.

*** Please Note for the 2023 RFP Course Schedule ***

Please refer to the website (www.aarfp.com) for the most current schedule of our course offerings. If there are discrepancies between the printed version and the website, the website is correct.

Dates and locations are subject to change.

Courses may be added, rescheduled, or cancelled throughout the year.

Online Training Reminder

Don't forget that online training is available through our partners! Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP) is offering courses for the Recreation Facility Management Certificates and Alberta Municipal Health and Safety Association (AMHSA) is offering courses for the Safety Operator Certificates.



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2023 AARFP AGM

April 25, 2023 | 11:15 am | Red Deer Cambridge Hotel & Conference Centre



Want to Get Involved? Board Positions Available?

The next AARFP AGM will be held in **Red Deer** on **Tuesday, April 25th at 11:15am**. This meeting will be both in-person and online through Zoom. The Board of Directors needs your help filling some AARFP Board positions. Read below to see if this is a match for you!

Providing education, consultation and advocacy for people involved in recreation facility operations.

What Does the Board Do?

- Governs and directs the affairs of the Association
- Oversees the financial business of the Association
- Ensures accountability to the membership in all AARFP matters
- Provides strategic leadership and education in the area of recreation facilities
- Provides fellowship opportunities

What Are the Benefits to You?

- Influence the development of the AARFP Association
- Enhance your leadership and communication skills
- Experience in policy development and organizational governance
- Participate in the strategic direction of AARFP
- Introductions to and the opportunities to network with – industry experts, partner associations, politicians, and other recreational professionals

- Exposure to provincial and national issues and trends in recreation facilities
- Opportunity to take one AARFP course per year at no cost

What Positions Are Available?

The following positions are available for election at the **2023 Annual General Meeting**:

- President Elect
- Education Representative
- Parks and Sport Fields Representative
- Arena Representative
- Client Services Representative

If you are interested in joining the AARFP Board:



[CLICK HERE](#)

for the Board Roles and Responsibilities



[CLICK HERE](#)

for the 2023 Nomination Package



[CLICK HERE](#)

for the AARFP Bylaws

Engaging Children and Youth in Recreation

By Andrew Jones – AARFP Client Service Rep.

One of the largest and most impactful age groups that we as recreation professionals serve is youth and children. Everyday we walk into our facilities, we hear the joy and laughter of kids taking advantage of the great initiatives our communities create in both competitive and recreational sport. When working with user groups and recreational professionals, one of the biggest questions that I hear is that they want to attract more youth to participate in programs and activities.



There are many tools that can be used to achieve this goal and many communities have seen success with a wide variety of approaches. In my experience, one of the best and most effective ways to plan programming for youth is to create programming that is both engaging and most importantly fun for the participants.

Skills Development

When working with youth, they want to see that the programs we offer can help them grow and develop skills that they can take with them. A great example of this type of programming is the many Junior Lifeguard Clubs that are run across the province. This type of programming grows many useful skills for youth including the development of essential lifesaving skills and swim abilities. This is a skill that they can not only take with them the rest of their lives, but it can also assist them enter the workforce in the many aquatic centres that are spread across the province. This is just one program that can teach youth some essential skills to engage them in continued program development.

Fun in Programming

As with most activities, one of the best motivators is fun! Youth and children of all ages have one thing that will keep


them coming back to facility programs time and time again.

As we look at developing programs in facilities, one of the key topics of conversation we should be discussing as professionals is will people find this fun? Its amazing how often this area can be missed in program development. A recent example of

incorporating some fun into programming was the use of arena sound and lighting equipment to create a disco skate during a regular

public skating session. While this was a small change to a steadfast program, it was one that was extremely well received by all participants. It served as a bridge for the older generations to reminisce while introducing children and youth to a new activity.

As our recreation professionals continue to develop new and exciting programs for the youth of today and tomorrow to enjoy, it is important to remember to evaluate that our programs check a few essential boxes. While these are only a few of those items, I feel that they are important to the continued growth of the recreation program field. But I would ask the question back to people, what do you feel is the most important part of program development for youth? There is no one size fits all and what works in one community will not work in another. However, by working together we can develop a wealth of resources for everyone to draw upon to create high quality youth programming.

As AARFP continues to build out the Client Services Stream, I encourage you to reach out to me at andrewwaynejones1@gmail.com if you have questions or suggestions for community programs, customer service training, facility management software, fitness-related training, or anything else! 

Spring Boulevard Sweeping

Tips to Swing into Summer!



Umesh Chand, AARFP Parks and Sport Fields Rep, and City of St. Albert Team lead Sports Fields and Open Green Spaces

Spring sweeping is the process whereby sand and chips (debris), which have accumulated over the course of the winter, are cleaned from the surface. This debris is removed from roadways, boulevards, and medians. Spring sweeping in our City of St. Albert is needed given the large volumes of sand used during the winter to improve safe driving conditions. Sweeping is an essential transitional program which helps prepare the city for the operation of summer programs. The summer programs include: roadway, sidewalk, parks, and greenspace maintenance. All these programs require that the city's roadways, medians, and boulevards are free from sand and dust. Once the residents see the sweepers on the road, they know that Spring and Summer are just around the corner!

Here are some highlights and tips that can be used for your safe work practices.

Potential Hazards and Controls

During spring sweeping, the biggest hazard is traffic. Broom operators must work closely with the blowers and the sign people to keep a safe environment for the public and the workers involved. Workers must remain aware of their surroundings.

A flag person may sometimes be used to divert or hold traffic when needed.

1. **Traffic:** signs are set up to keep the operators and workers in a safe zone, but some motorists and pedestrians do not heed the warnings and can become a hazard. The workers must always keep alert and aware of their surroundings.
2. **Pedestrians:** pedestrians can come from any walkway, and it is important to remember this. Pedestrians should be given an alternative route so that they do not pass within the job site. Also, the blowers work very closely with the brooms, and they must always be watched for. It is good to give at least 20 feet distance between the blowers and the brooms.

3. **Stationary Objects:** The workers must assess each job site for the location of objects that may hamper them from completing the job assigned. The crew must be aware of and responsible for the safe operation of the equipment around these obstacles. A Field Level Risk Assessment can be done to determine possible hazards.
4. **Flying Chips:** Sand and chips are a hazard to workers, pedestrians, and vehicles. Broom operators must shut their brooms down when there are workers or pedestrians near their machine.
5. **Dust:** Overexposure to silica dust from sweeping may lead to lung cancer (silicosis) over time. Operators are provided with fitted N95 respirators to control silica exposure. Water trucks dampen the boulevards to reduce dust in the air and will return if they dry up.
6. **Noise:** Broom operators must wear hearing protection to protect from permanent hearing damage due.

Environmental Aspects

Spring Boulevard sweeping has been identified as a significant environmental aspect, with both positive actual impacts, and negative potential impacts. The opportunity that is the positive impact is the reduction of sedimentation and salinification of the storm system and surface waters by removing the sand and chips, as well as the salt they contain, from the boulevards. The potential risk to the environment from spring cleanup is having piles or windrows of chips entering the storm system through catch basins, therefore; when sweeping piles and windrow, they should be pushed around catch basins, and not over.

Quick guide to Boulevard Sweeping Start Up.


- Check the equipment before leaving for the job site. Reflective clothing, earplugs, and dust masks must be worn on the job.

continued on next page...

Spring Boulevard Sweeping . . .

continued from page 12

- Sweep main arterial roads and important routes every Spring.
- The team lead or supervisor should check the condition of the boulevards to make sure that they are dry enough.
- The crew is assigned and sent out to job site.
- One certified flag person starts by setting traffic signs for a three to four block area.
- A lead truck will drive ahead looking for hazards on the boulevard of curb, including, but not limited to signs, marking flags, low tree branches, and holes.
- Determine a procedure for the type of equipment being used and the process to complete the job. For example, the first sweep may complete two passes one above the sidewalk and one on the sidewalk. The second sweep may start below the sidewalk and sweep the sand and chips toward the road. Blower operators may blow around the trees, handicap ramps, signs, power boxes, etc.
- A skid steer with a blade may be needed to pull as much chips out of the gutter to help the sweepers.
- The signs should be continuously moved to where the crew is working.
- The final equipment (Eg. Street sweeper) then picks up the windrow of chips and dumps in a central location.
- If the windrow is too heavy with sand and debris, it may need to be picked up with a loader and hauled away to the landfill.

This is just a little quick information guide to help out your community with Spring Clean up. Please don't forget to train, educate, and comply with all legislation and responsibilities at all levels to have a safe and productive operation of Spring Sweeping. Stay safe and healthy, enjoy! 



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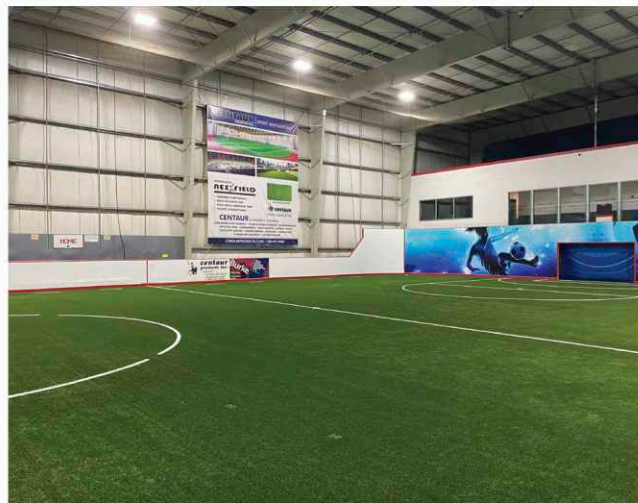
AARFP Communications & Marketing Coordinator

Helena Milovic



I am the new communications and marketing coordinator. Words fail to describe my excitement in joining the amazing community and team in the AARFP. I come from a technology and software background, but my true passion is and always will be recreation. I can be found in the park, skating rink (skating very badly), or lost on the mountains. I have graduated from the University of Calgary with a degree in marketing and a minor in sociology. Which has helped me undertake various digital and marketing roles in the technology industry. I am very excited to use my skills to further the purpose of AARFP. Please feel free to reach out to me via communications@aarfp.com!

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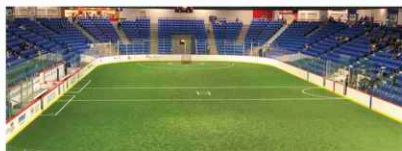
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Icey Business of Mental Health



Craig Dilts – AAARFP Arena Rep.


Working in rinks can involve a lot of behind-the-scenes operations. It's not uncommon for staff to work alone, work late into the morning hours, and go months without a real meaningful conversation. From this perspective, the rink can truly be an ice-cold place, mentally. For some, they prefer it this way. Life is simpler and often less stressful when avoiding people and interactions.

However, human nature has its way of showing us that we are wired differently. Having worked in rinks for many years, I'm no stranger to the subtle loneliness, isolation, and circadian rhythm affecting the environment. In my own experience, the term 'mental health' was foreign and misunderstood. I would even get frustrated when those around me brought it up to request time off or to state that it was affecting their overall health. I never really understood what it meant, and I, admittedly, had a sense of denial to it all.

Over the years, I have come to understand it more. It not only makes more sense at work but even with my own family members. That hardest part about mental health struggles was realizing that everyone experiences life differently. Hard times come and go, but for some they stay longer. There's a lot of self-care practices that can benefit your life so try some of these out and share them with your teams, you would be surprised the impact they will have.

- Try out a fitness class
- Engage in learning opportunities
- Try sleeping without your phone next to you
- Experience nature and periods of quiet
- Schedule some "me time" away from your regular commitments

Above all else, if you are struggling, please reach out! The rink doesn't need to be both physically and mentally cold. You are not alone and there is a lot of assistance available!

- Alberta Health Services: Addiction and Mental Health
- 211 Alberta
- Canadian Mental Health Association 



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It's Time to Re-Connect in Recreation



JOHN NAPIER

2023 AARFP Conference and Trade Show

We are getting super excited for our 44th Annual AARFP Conference "RE-Connecting in Recreation"! The conference will be held on April 23rd -26th, 2023, in Red Deer at the newly branded Red Deer Resort and Casino (formerly the Cambridge Hotel and Conference Centre), so be sure to sign up NOW on the events page of our website <https://aarfp.com>.

Our conference welcomes delegates from across the Province of Alberta and often others from British Columbia, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. This event is an opportunity for recreation staff to develop and build on experience and skills through the education program, create and maintain relationships through networking as well as learn about new trends and/or opportunities with Associates. We want to Re-Connect with you and your staff!

We will be offering not 1, not 2, but 3 fantastic keynote speakers!

Alysia Rissling will be kicking us off on Sunday evening; "Alysia aka Rizz will introduce us to the fastest sport on ice - Bobsleigh! Listen as Alysia takes us on a trip not just down the track but through the twists and turns of adversity that she needed to conquer before standing at the start line at the Olympic Games. Rizz's story speaks to how setting short term

goals, prioritizing relationships, and investing in yourself can create an opportunity to reach your biggest dreams."

Our tried-and-true MC Peter Brown will have us in stitches on the Monday morning keynote; "Nothing wears you down like job stress and uncertainty, especially these days. You're exhausted. You're cranky. You're losing sleep. And worst of all you feel powerless -you have no control over the changes that are coming at you. That's where LAUGHING MATTERS comes in. Peter will show us the many ways laughter can help us cope with stress and change."

Then to send us off on Wednesday we'll be inspired by the musing of our final keynote speaker, Rod Pedersen, broadcaster extraordinaire!

Our conference team has also been dedicated to building a conference to meet the needs of our ever-changing industry. We have put together a strong program where delegates will walk away with some key learning to inspire their organizations to be the best they can be.

Along with our tried-and-true stream sessions in Aquatics, Arenas, Parks & Sports fields, Building Maintenance and Leadership & Client Services, we have partnered with the Alberta Association of Aquatic Professionals to offer a whole set of sessions on Programming.

In keeping with tradition, we will be hosting our ever-popular Fun Run and BBQ on Sunday prior to Alysia, along with a live band after we have been inspired by her keynote. The fun and excitement continue into Monday evening with our spectacular tradeshow of 70 vendors looking to engage and educate you with their wares.

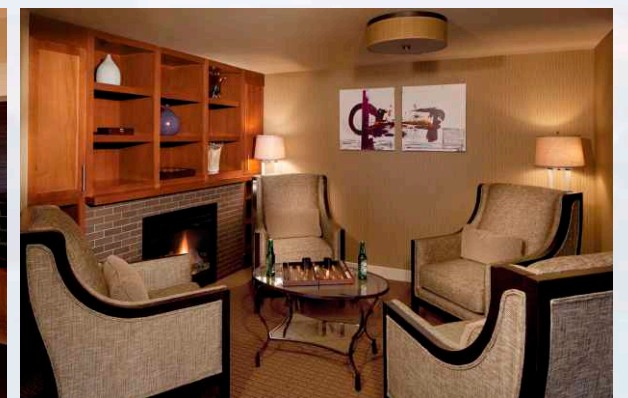
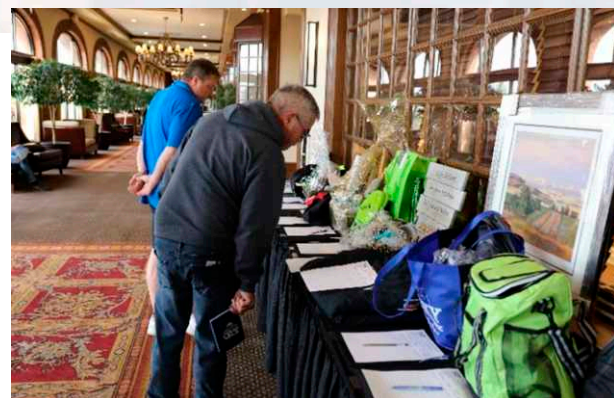


Tuesday afternoon offers a bit of downtime to explore Red Deer and area by signing up for one of the offered activities. One of these activities is the 10th Annual Skip Hayden Golf Tournament. That's right, it's back where it started; imbedded right in the conference program on Tuesday, April 25th at 1:00pm. However, registration for this tournament will be separate from the Conference Registration, so Click Here for all details and to register.

Then it's off to the ball. Get yourself spiffed up for the awards banquet to celebrate your fellow rec professionals, then end the evening with entertainment from Occasional Notes (<https://www.occasionalnotes.net>); they will be sure to make you smile.

You can receive all of this, plus amazing networking, for the low price of \$599.00 (early bird rate).

Looking forward to Re-Connecting in Recreation, April 23rd - 26th, 2023 at the Red Deer Resort and Casino!



An Open-Minded Skeptic's Opinion of Air Removal From Skating Ice

Spring is fast approaching

By Terry Piche, CRFP, CIT, Technical Director, Ontario Recreation Facilities Association

As a practitioner first, and as ORFA's Technical Director second, I have seen a lot of change in the recreation facility industry these past 40 years. As such, I have become an open-minded skeptic. I am

open to new methods, techniques and technologies that can improve the industry based on members' field testing any such enhancement. However, as an open-minded skeptic, I have seen a lot of "next best things," often paid for by the taxpayer, that were designed to be game changers in our industry and yet ended up in landfill sites. Let me highlight just a few.

The exciting introduction of Low-E technology went through a variety of research and development paid for by the industry. As exciting as this energy changing installation was, the reality is that it was primarily being installed to compensate for poor ice rink design and construction. Variable speed secondary refrigerant pumps were the next big thing that were installed to replace poorly researched single stage pumps that were given no thought when electrical costs were not an issue.

"Smart Drive" systems actually proved that the industry was not that smart. Return on Investment (ROI) was actually Replacement Of (original poor) Installation. Most Ontario rinks that were built in the 1970s were based on climate and facility use data from the 1950-60s. This information was used to help determine the size of chiller and condenser requirements based primarily on a seven-month operating season. Design and refrigeration plant construction were slow to adapt as our environment and use patterns changed. Facility performance was next impacted by its natural aging process with any upgrade having immediate and notable improvement in operations giving an instant feeling of a good ROI. Again, the reality was poor asset management. We often



pushed every piece of equipment until it drew its last breath and only then updated it. Consider that most likely for at least the last three years of its operations, the asset operated at 50 per

cent or less of efficiency up to the time of death.

One of the last proven shifts that I have watched unfold is ice resurfacer laser technology that was introduced in Ontario by the Resurface Corporation more than 20 years ago. This change created a natural divide of industry practitioners on its value. Older operators were often slow to embrace the equipment. This was based on a fear of loss of blade control (that does not mean they knew how to control it) to technology they could not understand and the many other items that had been introduced to use that quickly fell to the side. The other barrier was the cost of the laser system as it could add an additional 25 to 30 per cent to a purchase price. In today's marketplace, the ROI on this investment is proven and a much simpler sell to senior financial decision makers. But to be clear, all laser technology does is replace a well-trained operator who knows ice making and maintenance. A competent operator's hand on the blade adjustment wheel and flood water control valve will provide the same ROI. However, employment patterns in our industry have also changed as many ice rink staff no longer stay for their entire career based on work/life balance. This turnover of staff does not always allow time to gain the necessary experience, so laser technology helps fill the gap.

My position with the Association is primarily research and development. I research topics and develop course materials to reflect industry best practice based on member practitioner

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An Open-Minded Skeptic's Opinion of Air Removal From Skating Ice . . .

continued from page 18

experiences. The ORFA does not develop standards or best practice – the industry does that organically. One of the biggest challenges is applying any change in a province with 1,000 skating ice sheets where no two buildings or operations are the same. Additional mud in the water is field testing any change in the many other provinces, territories, states or countries where the variables may even be more extensive. For example, we have some locations where energy costs remain very reasonable. Natural water quality and shifting climate patterns based on geography can be another significant calculation adjustment difference. And lastly, yet most important, is the front-line operator's education and understanding of the topic so that they can analyze whatever the change is.

Today, I watch the industry being divided into two camps over cold-water floods that can be applied through water degassing technology. Beyond ORFA's standard disclaimer, I offer an additional layer of disclaimer to this topic: I have not personally used any of these devices, I am not an engineer and as Cody Bateman of the Dallas Stars once quipped "...talk slow, I made my living driving in circles." I struggle with the amount of information surrounding water degassing equipment, opinions that are not always based on good science with bits and pieces of support materials that do not always reflect the original full context of the source. I continue to be a student.

The introduction of water degassing equipment arrived at a time when the industry was once again seeking operational and energy cost reduction opportunities. The pitch was often given to politicians at non-recreation facility industry related trade show conferences. These event attendees were often hungry for cost reduction opportunities but knew nothing of the ice sheet industry. Often the ice maker is avoided by those selling this type of equipment and the pitch is made to senior administrative staff that know nothing about the industry and have a separate agenda of energy management, being green or operational cost reduction. I recently viewed a testimonial on a device that had a staff member who, in 2020, talked about putting down the fire hose and using light sprays of water through a special water application device and what great ice they now had.

Use of professional ice arenas as a testing ground for new products is often a moot point. However, similar application really needs careful consideration anytime they are referenced in community rinks operations. Do not become blinded by the reflection from the professional organization's shield. Consider that a typical professional ice sheet has 42 games of hockey and maybe some playoffs. Yes, highly skilled players but less of a challenge than any community rink hosting a four-day hockey tournament of 16-to-19-year-old players trying to impress scouting staff. In professional

“ Often the ice maker is avoided by those selling this type of equipment and the pitch is made to senior administrative staff that know nothing about the industry and have a separate agenda of energy management, being green or operational cost reduction. ”

venues, the building engineering staff who control the refrigeration plant and airhandling units are often really in charge of ice quality outcome.

The ORFA, through the original research and development of Doug Moore from Jet Ice, has long promoted the benefits of removing air from the ice creation and maintenance phases for over 40 years. No special tool investments are required. Some operations need water treatment – most do not. Small sprays of cold or hot water that freeze instantly will avoid air entrapment, which creates poor ice. Hot water is scientifically proven to have less air and that is why we still promote its benefit and use. There are a variety of special hose attachments available in the marketplace, but the reality is a garden hose and nozzle from the local hardware store in the hands of a well-trained ice maker that knows how to use them is all that is needed. Everything else is offered to speed the task. Speaking with operators who have invested in water degassing equipment that includes adjusting refrigeration head pressure and changing flooding techniques to industry-proven best practice creates a question as to what is in fact driving the claimed ROI. There is not an ice sheet anywhere that has high level of snow build up that cannot be corrected


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An Open-Minded Skeptic's Opinion of Air Removal From Skating Ice . . .

continued from page 19

with a little knowledge that is available online at no cost or provided in ORFA training courses. Again, to be clear, ORFA training courses are the end proven results of decades of practitioner's real world, field-tested applications and experiences. If the person selling you anything new has limited or no actual experience in the industry some deep fact checking may be in order.

Does water degassing equipment work? I do not know as the unfunded research and development by our industry is ongoing, so stay tuned. But if I were managing a community rink today, and about to spend a lot of the taxpayers' money on "the next best thing" I would need to be sure that I have done everything possible at "no cost" before investing in new options. The other real fact to understand is that someday in the future there will be litigation surrounding an ice injury that involved water degassing equipment. The court will demand

an explanation. And if the ORFA, with over 70 years of proven ice industry training, were called upon to provide expert testimony, the Association would state its position is rooted in original best practice methods of ice making. Whereas a facility manager and their defense counsel will most likely be left alone to explain water degassing technology to the court and why their organization felt it was a good operational decision. Stating that energy savings alone was the reason for the tool's use may not be the best practical nor helpful response to the court. 

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Aquatic Programming



High Quality Leadership = High Quality Aquatic Programs



Joshua Koke
Alberta Association of Aquatic Professionals
www.AAAP.ca

Effective leadership is key to the successful delivery of aquatic programs, including learn to swim programs, instructor and lifeguard training, specialty courses, and special events. It involves inspiring, motivating, and guiding a team of staff towards a common goal while taking into consideration the needs and interests of a variety of participants, many of whom may have

conflicting motivations and varying abilities. Programmers that apply effective leadership strategies can enhance the overall quality and enjoyment of the pool for instructors and guests alike.

An essential aspect of leadership in aquatic programming is setting clear and achievable goals. This involves setting realistic expectations for the team and creating a plan to reach the desired outcomes. Often, programmers and aquatic supervisors find themselves creating goals that feed into a larger vision created by their organization. The leader must communicate the vision and mission of the organization effectively and clearly to everyone involved, translating it into the everyday actions of instructors on their team. This helps to create a sense of purpose and direction, which is crucial for ensuring the success of aquatic programs and activities and helps each team member understand their place in the bigger picture.

In support of this vision, the leader needs to be able to delegate tasks and responsibilities effectively. This involves identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each team member, assigning them programs that are suited to those



strengths and abilities, and providing them tools to measure their success. Unfortunately, teaching is far more complex than simply using completion rates and guest feedback cards. Sometimes, the most effective teachers struggle to help a challenging student; other times, even the most unskilled instructors will have strong and capable students that succeed despite their instructor's

shortcomings. The Aquatic Programmer's job is to develop clear evaluation criteria that recognizes excellence and identifies challenges that team members are having in order to help correct or better support these instructors. Moreover, skilled leaders recognize that team members must have a way to evaluate their own performance as well, removed from the subjective feedback of others. Helping your team find ways to evaluate their own performance, and giving them growth targets to strive for, will help develop an intrinsic motivation to improve. Better yet, it can help them better interpret and apply the various comments they will hear from students, parents, and other team members.

Good communication skills are crucial for an effective leader to develop. The leader often finds themselves in the middle and must be able to communicate clearly with a variety of audiences, including team members, participants, managers, and other stakeholders. This includes answering questions, listening to concerns, evaluating new ideas, and resolving conflicts. The leader must exercise their communication skills, strengthening their abilities to actively listen to others and find ways to express themselves in a clear manner. When

continued on next page...

Aquatic Programming . . .



continued from page 22

citing communication concerns on employee engagement surveys, team members are far more likely to complain about a lack of communication as compared to receiving too much, and good communication skills will help to build trust, foster teamwork, and ensure everyone is working together in pursuit of the team's goals.

Finally, effective aquatic programmers commit to ongoing professional development, both for themselves and their teams. This involves staying current on evolving industry standards, best practices, and trends. Additionally, good leaders know that they can learn from their peers, attending conferences, regional meetings, or simply creating relationships with other professionals in their field. Helping to facilitate these connections, groups like the Alberta Association of Recreation Facility Personnel and the Lifesaving Society of Canada can provide new opportunities for learning and connections across the industry. Lastly, the leader must also be willing to explore new avenues for training and

development. There are a multitude of resources available that focus on team training techniques across a variety of industries. And while we should always learn from other programming professionals, there are also lessons to learn from others in the fields of education, hospitality, and customer service that can ensure our teams are providing high quality experiences for all participants. All combined, this growth mindset will ensure that aquatic programs remain competitive and highly valued in the community.

In conclusion, effective leadership is a critical component of delivering high-quality aquatic programs. By setting clear and achievable goals, delegating tasks effectively, communicating with clarity, and committing to ongoing learning and growth, aquatic programmers can inspire and motivate their teams to provide safe and productive programs for their participants. By prioritizing these key aspects of leadership, aquatic programs not only meet, but exceed expectations and provide memorable experiences for everyone involved. ◀

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When are Children Ready to Learn to Swim?

Analyzing the data

Donna McKean, BSc Kinesiology, Aquatic Program Coordinator
TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre

A study was conducted at the TransAlta Tri Leisure Centre in Spruce Grove to discover what the best age is for children to learn to swim and to be able to master skills and strokes such as front crawl. It was based on observation of a variety of swim lessons and analyzing data gathered from completed instructor worksheets. Red Cross Swim was the program that was being used at the time of the study.



corroborated the observations. The data showed that the age at which children are most “ready” to learn to swim is at about 6.5-7 years. Preschool programs are good for helping children become more comfortable in the water in preparation for learning the more intricate skills required in swimming, but the average child who goes to swim lessons once or twice a week will not master front crawl or back crawl

until they are school age. 

The observations noted that certain skills required in various levels were difficult for children to master until they hit a certain age, and it was only when they became old enough that they were able to “get it”. Analyzing the data



The complete study is available on the AARFP News Page: [CLICK HERE TO READ](#)

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Furnace Tips 101

Regular upkeep and routine maintenance.



Chuck Holloway (Airtech) & Chad Glasser (AARFP Building Maintenance Rep, Town of Coaldale Recreation and Facilities Foreman)

Every year when the ice goes in, we prepare to heat our facilities for the upcoming ice season. Like most hardworking appliances, furnaces require regular upkeep and routine maintenance. An HVAC professional should check your facility ductwork and clean your furnace on a bi-annual basis to keep everything running smoothly.

If you have a routine maintenance schedule, but your furnace is still malfunctioning (blowing cold air or perhaps blowing no air at all), there are some furnace troubleshooting tips to be aware of.



cannot communicate with the furnace. Changing the batteries may solve all your problems.

3. Replace Furnace Filter

Dirty filters affect the air quality in your facility resulting in shutting off the furnace completely. This is especially common in newer gas furnaces as they will turn off to avoid overheating. Furnace filters should be changed every 30-90 days to allow for proper air flow.

Troubleshooting Tips

To start troubleshooting your furnace, review the basics. If issues become more complicated, call an HVAC professional.

1. Make Sure the Thermostat Is Set Properly

Confirm that your thermostat is set on "heat" and the temperature is positioned where you want it. Perhaps someone in your facility turned down the thermostat or accidentally flipped a switch. If the thermostat is set properly, turn it up a few degrees to see if that makes a difference.

2. Change Thermostat Batteries

If you have a battery-powered thermostat, make sure the batteries are working. If they are dead, the thermostat

4. Check Circuit Breakers

There is always the possibility that you have blown a fuse or flipped a breaker. Locate your fuse box or look for a switch marked "furnace." If you are familiar with your breaker box or fuse panel, you can switch the flip back or replace the fuse. If not, contact a professional.

5. Check Fuel Source

Extreme caution is needed when dealing with gas or propane. If familiar, you can check to see if your valve was somehow turned off by accident or if a pilot light has went out. If you smell gas, contact an HVAC professional immediately! They are trained to handle any natural gas leaks as it's extremely dangerous.

continued on next page...

Furnace Tips 101 . . .



continued from page 27

When to Contact an HVAC Professional

If the furnace troubleshooting checklist did not alleviate your issue or you ran into one of the problems below, then call your local HVAC professional to get your furnace working again.

- **Noisy Furnace:** If your furnace is clanging, banging, or making other noises, this could be a symptom of a serious problem. Call a professional.
- **Gas Line Issue:** Leave a natural gas problem to the professionals! It can be dangerous.
- **Faulty Pilot Light or Furnace Flame:** If your pilot light keeps going out, contact a professional, as the ignition switch may be installed incorrectly.
- **Improperly Installed Furnace:** If your furnace was installed wrong, then it could be leaking gas or carbon monoxide into your facility. Again, call a professional.

Experienced professionals can troubleshoot these furnace problems and keep your facility warm.

Furnace FAQs

How do I reset my furnace?


Most furnaces have a reset button on the top, on the side, or on the bottom. Check your owner's manual for the exact location.

Why is my furnace not coming on?

If your furnace is not working, and you have tried the furnace troubleshooting tips above, then contact your local HVAC professional.

How do you know if your furnace went out?

Referring to the furnace's manual for its location, see if your pilot light is on. The main gas line coming into your facility may be off for some reason; a call to your gas company should alleviate this. If you are having furnace problems, plenty of furnace troubleshooting tips exist. That said, if they do not work for you or if you feel uncomfortable completing any of them, give your local HVAC professionals a call. They can assess any issues and then repair your furnace so you can get back to normal operation.

Most importantly, remember to schedule regular HVAC maintenance to avoid problems, and when in need contact a professional! 



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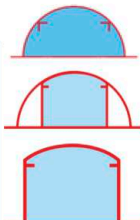
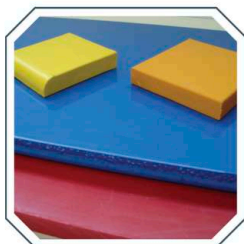
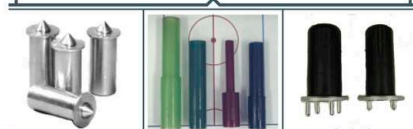
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NEMO Trichloramine Monitor

- The world's first air quality recorder to continuously measure trichloramine levels in indoor pools
- Permanent install and portable options available
- Results are easily downloaded to any computer, and are displayed on a graph
- Exceptionally accurate and cost effective



CLARITY® Instruments Chemical Controller

- Intuitive color LCD display
- Highly accurate free chlorine sensor
- Remote access from any web browser
- Optional turbidity sensor
- Smart VFD control - slow pump speeds down based on different water quality parameters. Save energy!
- Ask us about the CT Value calculator/timer for pool contaminations!



WAPO® Chlor Electrolysis System

- Exceptionally safe and cost-effective on-site chlorine generation system
- Makes safe & pH neutral liquid chlorine from salt & water
- No salt gets added to the pool water. Salt is handled in the mechanical room and converted directly to liquid chlorine!
- Eliminates handling and storage of hazardous chlorine products
- Various size options to perfectly suit any pool

We believe that Trichloramine levels should be monitored in every aquatic facility. Trichloramine or Nitrogen trichloride (NCl₃), is a chemical compound belonging to the chloramine family. It is formed as a by-product during the reaction of free chlorine and nitrogen derivatives from bathers such as sweat, saliva, urine and bacteria. High free chlorine residuals and increasing levels of bather contamination promote NCl₃ formation. Testing your water for 'combined chlorine' is only part of the picture and will not reveal the true risk of what is gassing off from the pool water into the air. The ratio of chlorine to waste, the pH and agitation of the water all contribute to the reactions that cause 'combined chlorine' to gas off from water into the air. Regular monitoring of trichloramine levels can identify health risks to bathers and staff. With our testing service we work with you to provide feedback on your overall treatment process and include recommendations to improve your water and air quality. The current recommendation from the WHO is a maximum value 0.50 mg/m³. Worksafe BC recommends below 0.35 mg/m³.



Toll Free: **1.800.661.6444**

Local (Edmonton): **780.468.3261**

www.automatedaquatics.com