

## ABOVE GROUND POOL WINTERIZING TIPS from *PETTIS POOLS*



*A pool exposed to freezing temperatures is subject to extreme stress and strain and if not properly winterized, can sustain severe damage. Manufacturers warrant their pools against defects in workmanship and materials. However, this warranty does not cover damage resulting from ice movement, high winds, improper maintenance or assembly. Therefore, we urge you to take care in winterizing your above ground pool.*

### WINTERIZING YOUR ABOVE GROUND POOL

1. **Continue to chemically treat and filter your pool water** until the pool is closed down for the winter.
2. **Examine** the entire framework and walls. Check for any misalignment and deterioration, correct and touch up where necessary. Tighten any loose bolts. Check that the top of the liner is properly seated on the top of the wall and secured.
3. **Vacuum all dirt** from your pool before winterizing. If you have leaves or other debris in your pool, you'll find that a **Leaf Bagger**, available here at Pettis Pools, will make the job much easier. Make sure all leaves are removed from the pool as those left in the water over the winter may stain your liner as well as provide food for the growth of algae and other microorganisms. Any "bathtub ring" dirt line should be removed by using a vinyl cleaner such as "Baquacil Surface Cleaner" which is compatible with chlorine, Baquacil and all other systems.
4. **Remove all pool accessories** from the pool, such as ladders, walk-in steps, slides and over-the-wall skimmers. Clean and store in a safe place.

### **IMPORTANT! IMPORTANT! READ ON.....**

5. **If you have an automatic chlorinator**, disconnect this from your filtration system and let it drain completely in preparation for indoor winter storage. If there is a partially used chlorine canister in your chlorinator, you must take great care in how you handle this canister! **Again, we stress, take great care in how you handle any partially-used chlorine canisters.** (Rather than start a new canister toward the end of the season, it is better to finish out with dry or liquid chlorine.) The tablets in a partially -used canister will be wet or damp and it is **CRUCIAL** that these tablets be **absolutely dry** before you store them for the winter. This applies to bulk type feeders as well.

The partially-used chlorine canister or bulk feeder must be drained and the tablets dried. If your canister is the type that has one end that opens, you can carefully spread the tablets on plastic, taking care not to inhale the fumes. **KEEP ALL TABLETS IN A WELL-VENTILATED AREA AND OUT OF THE REACH OF CHILDREN.** **WARNING! MAKE CERTAIN ALL STABILIZED CHLORINE TABLETS ARE AWAY FROM ANYTHING ORGANIC!! FIRE AND/OR EXPLOSION COULD RESULT FROM CONTACT!**

When absolutely dry, the tablets may be placed in the canister again, triple wrapped in plastic wrap such as garbage bags and kept in a cool dry area until next season when they may again be activated in your automatic chlorinator. Unused chlorine canisters may also be stored in a dry, cool place over the winter months. Since chlorine is highly corrosive, we suggest that you NOT store it in a small area where you have tools, etc.

that could rust. And of course, once again, all chemicals should always be out of the reach of children.

6. **Liquid Chlorine** will deteriorate over the long winter months and it is not advisable to try to save it. Rather, it is better to empty all remaining chlorine into the pool at the end of the season.

7. **Test Kits** should be taken into the house for winter storage. Discard any remaining chlorine or pH test reagents and replace with fresh bottles in the spring. If you are using Test Strips, pay special attention to the expiration date printed on the side of the container. (Old reagents or test strips could give false readings, leaving you to possibly attempt to treat a problem that really doesn't exist.)

8. **If you have an in-wall skimmer**, remove all internal parts. Refer to your Skimmer Instruction Guide for the manufacturer's proper winterizing recommendations. The water level in your pool should be below the skimmer opening. Water or ice must not be allowed to collect in the skimmer housing. The use of an **Aquadoor** which completely covers the skimmer opening is recommended. This prevents displaced water from entering the skimmer housing and possibly causing cracking or ice damage. If the skimmer cover doesn't readily snap securely in place, firmly tape it. Return fittings can be plugged with a winterizing expansion plug.

WARNING!

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**NEVER NEVER** put a "gizmo" in an above ground skimmer or plug the opening in any way!!!! Under certain winter conditions, plugging the skimmer could lead to ice formation and tears in the liner and/or severe damage or even total destruction of your pool wall. Again, we recommend that you either leave the skimmer open or use a winterizing plate on the front of it. **NEVER** plug the bottom opening of your skimmer.

9. Most above ground pools are designed to be left up all winter but nonetheless are subject to the warranty of the manufacturer. If there is no thru-wall skimmer, you must still lower your water level 12 to 18 inches from the top of the pool or ice expansion could force the top rails out of position.

**10. IMPORTANT! A POOL EXPOSED TO FREEZING TEMPERATURES MUST NOT LEAK!** Prior to winterizing, observe your pool closely for at least a period of one week. If you think there may be a leak, mark the water level with a piece of tape and observe any changes over the next three or four days. Any hole in the liner **must be repaired** before you close your pool for the winter!

It is not uncommon for a leak to develop during rigorous summer usage and go undetected. What is thought to be water loss due to evaporation or splashing may instead be caused by a small hole. Persistent wet or damp areas around the pool should be further inspected. **Any leak must be found and repaired.**

Any water leakage which is undetected or occurs after the top surface is frozen will allow this ice to move downward in your pool, possibly damaging your liner, wall and/or framework. Maintain a strict leak inspection during the fall, winter and spring months. Also check to see that the thru-wall skimmer is free of debris and ice, and that the water level in the pool is below inlet and skimmer openings if they are not closed off with winterizing plates and plugs. **Bottom or main drains:** If your pool has a bottom drain, the line connecting this to your filter must be raised above the water level of your pool and secured to a post or pool vertical to insure minimal water loss. **NEVER PLUG THIS LINE.**

11. **To chemically treat your chlorine-sanitized pool for the winter**, it is recommended that the pool be superchlorinated a day or two ahead of the time you plan to install your cover, adding sufficient chlorine to register a positive reading. **Important!** *Closing a pool without some FREE CHLORINE present will negate the benefits of a winterizing shock treatment.*

Just before placing cover on pool, add the contents of the **Winterizing Kit** as follows:

(1) Broadcast 1# of Non-chlorine Shock for each 10,000 gallons of water to destroy chloramines. (2) Add 1 qt. Stain & Scale Remover for up to 25,000 gallons of water by pouring evenly around pool to help prevent scale and mineral precipitation. (3) Add the appropriate amount of 30% Algae Prevent which will help control algae growth during the inactive winter months.

If your pool water was very dirty when you closed your pool, or if we have an exceptionally warm spring, you may wish to add a second dose of algaecide under the cover some time early in spring before you open your pool.

**ALL POOLS TREATED WITH BAQUACIL** should follow Baquacil's directions for winterizing with the Baquacil products. **DO NOT USE ANY CHLORINE PRODUCTS OR OTHER CHEMICALS THAT WOULD NOT BE COMPATIBLE WITH BAQUACIL!!** Recommendations can be found in the Baquacil Pool Owner's Guide.

12. **A pool cover is strongly recommended** as a sound investment for the protection and long life of your pool and liner. The purpose of a pool cover is to prevent leaves and debris from entering the pool and more importantly, to block out sunlight so that the algae will not grow in your pool water. If winterized properly, your pool will be ready to go when the cover is removed in the spring. Your cover should float on the water so that the pressures are equalized and very little force is placed on the cover itself. **The use of an inflated pressure compensator or ice pillow placed under the cover is strongly recommended.** When floating on the water, it will help to support the cover. When the water freezes, these air pillows bear some of the pressure from the resulting ice.

It is also recommended that toward the end of fall, most of the accumulated water from rain or snow be drained from the cover and if there is an early spring thaw, it would be wise to siphon or pump that water from the cover too. Do anything you can to prevent excessive pressure and pulling on the cover.

13. **Storing your Filter** - Refer to your Filter Instruction Guide for winterizing your filter. Because there is still water left in some parts, the pump should not be stored in an unheated shed or garage where temperatures will fall below freezing. If you have a sand filter that takes 100# - 200# of filter sand, you will probably find it more practical to simply discard the sand and replace it in the spring. For the larger, inground type filters that remain in place and full of sand all winter long, you will need to use a filter cleaner to clean the sand before you use it again next season. This filter cleaner is easy to use and the process should be done at the end of each season. If your filter will stay outdoors for the winter, be sure to remove pressure gauge and store inside.

### **OPENING YOUR POOL IN THE SPRING**

1. Reinstall filter and reconnect all hoses. Make certain that clamps are tight, etc. To insure no leakage, purchase a tube of non-hardening gasket cement such as Permatex#2, and use teflon tape on all connections and threads.
2. Wipe the side of the pool with a mild cleanser. Vacuum pool and add proper amount of pool conditioner and sanitizer.

After your pool has been filled and the water circulated for at least 24 hours, bring in a pint-size sample of pool water taken at least 18 inches below the surface for a free water analysis. Regardless of the type of sanitizer you are using, all pool water should first be balanced, based on water test results.

**FREE WATER TEST :** Our water testing services are available to you at no charge. Samples of water should be taken after the pool has been opened, filled to the proper water level and circulated for at least 24 hours. Samples should be taken approximately 18" under the water and should be brought to us in a clean glass jar or if you prefer, pick up a free water sample bottle at either of our two locations.

#### **FREE POOL SCHOOL:**

**Pettis Pools** offers a FREE Pool School to help you understand and care for your pool. Winterizing procedures are reviewed in the fall, and Opening procedures in the spring. We'll tell you everything you need to know, and show you how to do it. Hands-on and one-on-one instructions will help you know what to do to protect your investment. Everyone is welcome.

**Offered on Saturdays at both Greece (9 AM) and E.Rochester (10 AM) locations,**