

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Definition	N.J.A.C. 8:26-1.3 Definitions "Hot tub or spa" Any pool having a maximum depth of 48 inches used in conjunction with high velocity water recirculation systems in which mineral or non-mineral water is used and is not emptied after each use. Water temperature is hot, cold, or ambient. The term shall not include hot tubs and spas used solely for aquatic physical therapy, except as covered by N.J.A.C. 8:43H-21.3(e) and other applicable rules	Same as hot tub provision.
Water recirculation	Yes	Yes
Drain Cover	VGB compliant	VGB compliant
Weekly water analysis requirement	N.J.A.C. 8:26-7.5 Microbiological water quality standards for swimming pools, wading pools, and aquatic recreation facilities (a) A heterotrophic plate count shall be performed in accordance with DSAM procedures approved by the NJDEP in accordance with the authority codified at N.J.A.C. 7:18. The number of colony-forming units (CFU) shall not exceed 200 colonies per one milliliter sample. (b) <i>Pseudomonas aeruginosa</i> requirements are as follows: 1. The membrane filtration technique for <i>P. aeruginosa</i> shall be conducted in accordance with DSAM procedures approved by the NJDEP in accordance with the authority codified at N.J.A.C. 7:18. The number of <i>P. aeruginosa</i> organisms shall be less than one colony per 100 milliliter sample. 2. The multiple-tube fermentation technique for <i>P. aeruginosa</i> shall be conducted in accordance with the procedures codified at 40 CFR part 131, incorporated herein by reference. <i>P. aeruginosa</i> organisms shall not be present in more than one of all ten standard 10 milliliter portions. <i>P. aeruginosa</i> shall not be present in any of the confirmed five portions.	Same as hot tub provision. Additional: Facilities that dump and refill single-user units weekly would be exempt from weekly microbiological testing.
Supervision	N.J.A.C. 8:26-5.8 Hot tub and spa supervision (a) Supervision of a hot tub or spa shall be provided	Same as hot tub provision.

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
	<p>by a designated adult supervisor who is knowledgeable of these rules and who shall be responsible for all phases of its operation.</p> <p>(b) At least one person currently certified in standard first aid and professional level adult, child, and infant CPR by a Department of Health approved organization listed in N.J.A.C. 8:26 Appendix A shall be on the premises, available, and readily accessible when the hot tub or spa is in use. If the trained and qualified personnel are not stationed at the hot tub or spa, then the facility shall conspicuously post a sign indicating the location and method of access of such personnel. The qualified personnel shall be able to render assistance in a safe and timely manner.</p> <p>1. First aid and CPR retraining shall be required prior to the expiration of an individual's certification.</p> <p>2. A sign shall be posted indicating the location of first aid supplies.</p>	
Customer age restriction	Persons under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult. (N.J.A.C. 8.26-5.8 (d) signage)	Same as hot tub provision.

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Signage	<p>Same as listed in NJAC 8.26-5.8. A precautionary sign shall be posted adjacent to the entrance to the hot tub or spa and shall state the following:</p> <p>"CAUTION"</p> <p>"Pregnant women, elderly persons, those suffering from heart disease, diabetes, high or low blood pressure, or those using prescription medications should not enter this hot tub or spa without prior medical consultation and permission from their doctor."</p> <p>"Unsupervised use by children under 16 years of age is prohibited."</p> <p>"Do not use this hot tub or spa while under the influence of alcohol or drugs."</p> <p>"Do not use this hot tub or spa while alone."</p> <p>"Shower before entering this hot tub or spa."</p> <p>"There shall be a 15-minute time limit on time spent in the hot tub or spa. Long continuous exposures may result in nausea, dizziness, or fainting."</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p> <p>Additional: We recommend additional signage should be posted indicating:</p> <p>(i) "Adverse health outcomes may result from intense and sudden changes in exposure temperature which may include immediate impaired coordination, loss of control of breathing, muscle cramps, or a loss of consciousness."</p> <p>(ii) "Due to the risk of cold shock from total or partial immersion in cold water, any bather should consult a physician before using the cold plunge pool."</p> <p>(iii) "Exposure to water colder than 70°F can trigger symptoms such as rapid breathing, a sudden increase in heart rate and blood pressure, and cognitive impairment, all of which significantly raise the risk of drowning."</p>
Heater and temperature requirements	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.3 Heater and temperature requirements</p> <p>(a) The maximum temperature of hot tub or spa water shall be 104 degrees Fahrenheit (40 degrees Celsius). § 8:26-4.3</p> <p>(b) Water temperature regulating controls for maintaining the water temperature shall be installed and maintained in good operating condition. (40 degrees Celsius). § 8:26-4.3</p> <p>(c) An automatic safety device shall be installed to shut off the heater if the water temperature exceeds 104 degrees Fahrenheit. § 8:26-4.3</p> <p>(d) A thermometer shall be installed in the hot tub or spa. This thermometer shall be accurate to plus or minus one degree Fahrenheit (0.56 degrees Celsius) and shall be visible to the public.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p> <p>Additional: Manual adjustable unit(s) should not enable the user to adjust temperatures to above 104°F.</p>

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Construction and design	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.1 Construction and design</p> <p>(a) The hot tub or spa owner and operator shall ensure that the construction, design, signage, and safety features of a new or altered hot tub or spa conforms to the requirements of the Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23, incorporated herein by reference.</p> <p>(b) The maximum water depth of a hot tub or spa shall be four feet as measured from the water line. Exceptions may be made by the health authority for hot tubs or spas which are designed for special purposes, such as for instruction, treatment, and therapy. All existing swimming pools and wading pools shall comply with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 8001 through 8007, which became effective on December 17, 2008.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p> <p>Additional: Ensure VGB requirements are upheld for the unit(s).</p>
Construction materials	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.2 Construction materials</p> <p>All construction materials shall conform to the requirements of the Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23, incorporated herein by reference.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p>
Electrical, illumination, and ventilation requirements	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.4 Electrical, illumination, and ventilation requirements</p> <p>(a) All electrical wiring, illumination, ventilation, and bonding and grounding certification shall conform to the requirements of the Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23, incorporated herein by reference.</p> <p>(b) Bonding and grounding certification shall be provided annually by the owner or operator of a seasonal swimming pool or wading pool to the health authority prior to the opening of the swimming pool or wading pool.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p> <p>Local health departments (LHDs) should work with your local electrical subcode officials and/or contact UCC for assistance at CodeAssist@dca.nj.gov for specific guidance.</p>
Surface skimming system	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-6.14 Operational requirements for hot tubs and spas</p> <p>(e) The surface skimming system shall be maintained in good working order and have proper water flow levels at all times.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision, except:</p> <p>Not required for single-user unit tubs or any unit lacking surface skimming equipment.</p>

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Depth markings	N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.12 Depth markings (a) There shall be a minimum of two depth markings per hot tub or spa, regardless of the hot tub or spa size and shape. (b) The owner or operator shall ensure that depth markings are accurate and in compliance with the Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23, incorporated herein by reference.	It is recommended that in addition to N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.12 (a) the depth of a cold spa unit that lacks decking be clearly posted in a visible area within three feet of where the unit is located. In ground units that accommodate multiple users should comply with the specific depth marking requirements outlined in subsection N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.12 (a) and (b).
Fencing and enclosures	There are no requirements for fencing under subchapter 4 Hot Tubs and Spa. However, the Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23 does have specific rules for fencing on any structure intended for swimming, recreational bathing or wading that contains water over 24 inches (610 mm) deep.	For outdoor units: (a) Fencing and enclosures shall conform to the requirements of the New Jersey Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23, incorporated herein by reference. (8:26-3.12) For indoor units: It is recommended that the building itself be considered the barrier, provided that the building is secure, and each individual spa suite is protected against unauthorized entry.
Circulation systems	N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.7 Circulation systems (a) Pump rotation direction shall be clearly indicated on the pump and all visible piping. (b) Filters shall be designed so that filtration surfaces can be inspected and serviced. (c) Pressure filters shall have sight glasses, or the equivalent, installed on the wastewater discharge line, so that filter washing progress may be determined. The sight glasses shall be readily removable for cleaning purposes. (d) The circulation system shall contain a pump suction (vacuum) gauge, filter inlet pressure gauge, filter outlet pressure gauge, and flow meter.	Same as hot tub provision, except: Single user units that do not perform backwash activities do not need to comply with part (c), however, the unit must be equipped with a notification system indicator to alert when the filter needs to be changed. Recommended LHDs require filters to be monitored and changed by staff of the facility and not a responsibility of the user. Additionally, any circulation system notifications for all units employed on site should be monitored by a staff member.
Protection of potable water	N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.5 Protection of potable water (a) Protection of the potable water supply shall conform to the requirements of the Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23, incorporated herein by reference. (b) An alternate method of adding potable makeup water may be employed with the approval of the health authority.	Same as hot tub provision

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Disinfection	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.8 Disinfection</p> <p>(a) Disinfecting equipment shall: 1. Provide adequate and appropriate introduction, feeding, and regulating of a disinfectant into the circulation system of the hot tub or spa; 2. Consistently maintain the disinfectant residual in the hot tub or spa; and 3. Withstand wear in the course of normal use.</p> <p>(b) Gas chlorination shall be prohibited.</p> <p>(c) Chemical feeders, also called chemical controller systems, shall only be permitted if their installation (and use as specified in N.J.A.C. 8:26-6.14(l)) conforms to the following: 1. Chemical feeders shall be installed downstream from the filter and heater. 2. Where the chemical feeder is equipped with its own pump, the pump shall be installed so that it introduces the solution downstream from the heater and at a position lower than the heater outlet fitting. 3. Chemical feeders shall be wired, so they cannot operate unless the filter pump is running. Where the chemical feeder has an independent timer, the chemical feed pump timers shall be interlocked. 4. Erosion-type feeders shall be allowed to feed their solution to the suction side of the pump.</p> <p>(d) Electrolytic chlorine generators, when used for producing chlorine for disinfection, shall conform to the following: 1. Electrolytic chlorine generators shall ensure an adequate feed to meet the chlorine residual specified at N.J.A.C. 8:26-7.12. 2. A sodium chloride test kit shall be provided to monitor the salt concentration of the hot tub or spa.</p> <p>(e) Bromination, when used for disinfection, shall conform to the following: 1. A bromine test kit shall be available to monitor the bromine concentration of the hot tub or spa water. 2. Brominator equipment rooms shall be ventilated.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p> <p>Additional: Recommended to dump and refill single-user units biweekly. (Chlorine reaction rate is slower because the molecules move more slowly at lower temperatures. As a result, chlorine does not disinfect as efficiently in colder water.)</p>

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Circulation and turnover rate	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-6.14 Operational requirements for hot tubs and spas</p> <p>(j) Circulation system:</p> <p>1. The pumps, piping, return inlets and suction outlets, filters, and other necessary equipment in the circulation system shall be maintained to ensure the complete circulation of water throughout all parts of the hot tub or spa.</p> <p>2. The circulation system shall be operated, so as to turn over the entire hot tub or spa water capacity at least once every 30 minutes. Pumps shall be operated 24 hours a day and seven days a week.</p> <p>i. When the facility is not open, the turnover can be every six hours if a multiple-speed pump is utilized.</p>	<p>Same as the hot tub provision, except:</p> <p>For units under 104 gallons, the LHD should consider using the Model Aquatic Health Code (MAHC) Annex, Section 4.7.1.10, to calculate an appropriate turnover rate (TOR) for smaller units.</p> <p>https://www.cdc.gov/model-aquatic-health-code/media/pdfs/2024/11/5th-Ed-MAHC-Annex-508.pdf</p>

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Chemical water quality standards for hot tubs and spas	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-7.12 Chemical water quality standards for hot tubs and spas</p> <p>(a) Hot tubs and spas shall be monitored every two hours for disinfectant levels and pH pursuant to the methodologies set forth at N.J.A.C. 8:26-7.7.</p> <p>(b) A bound log shall be maintained as specified in N.J.A.C. 8:26-7.7(e).</p> <p>(c) Free chlorine, combined chlorine, bromine, and pH values shall be continuously maintained within the ranges specified in N.J.A.C. 8:26 Appendix D. Remedial action shall be taken if combined chlorine residuals exceed 0.2 ppm as it will result in reduced disinfectant efficiency.</p> <p>(d) If disinfectants other than those specified in (c) above are used, residuals of equivalent disinfecting strength shall be maintained.</p> <p>(e) If stabilized chlorines are used as disinfectants in outdoor hot tubs and spas, the cyanuric acid level shall be maintained within the ranges identified in the regulation.</p> <p>(f) Outdoor hot tubs or spas using cyanuric acid shall test the hot tub or spa water at least once per week with a kit covering the expected range (0-100 ppm).</p> <p>(g) Stabilized chlorines shall be prohibited in indoor hot tubs and spas.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p> <p>Additional: Cyanuric acid is prohibited in outdoor cold plunge units.</p> <p>It is recommended that units equipped with a chemical feeding system and electronic monitoring for the parameters listed in subsection (c) are not required to conduct the two-hour monitoring for single-user units.</p>
Air induction systems	<p>N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.9 Air induction systems</p> <p>(a) An air induction system shall prevent water back-up to eliminate electrical shock hazards.</p> <p>(b) Air intake sources shall not introduce contaminants, such as deck water, dirt, etc., into the hot tub or spa.</p>	<p>Same as hot tub provision.</p> <p>Additional: Cold plunge units that do not include hydrotherapy features or bubbling effects—and therefore lack air induction systems—are not required to comply with these specific provisions.</p> <p>It is recommended that LHDs obtain written confirmation from the manufacturer, facility operator, and/or owner stating that the unit does not include an air induction system, to ensure proper regulatory application.</p>

Cold Plunge Unit Guidance Document- NJ Public Recreational Bathing Project

	Hot tub or spa	Cold plunge pool
Aquatic recreation facilities	N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.14 Aquatic recreation facilities All provisions of this subchapter and N.J.A.C. 5:14A12, Water Amusement Rides, administered by the Department of Community Affairs, shall apply to aquatic recreation facilities.	Same as hot tub provision.
Existing facilities	N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.13 Existing hot tubs and spas (a) Alterations to existing hot tubs and spas shall conform to the requirements of the Uniform Construction Code, N.J.A.C. 5:23, incorporated herein by reference. 1. As used in this section, "existing" means installed and in use prior to September 7, 2010. 2. Alterations shall require approval by the health authority in addition to local code officials. 3. The hot tub or spa owner or operator shall submit to the health authority all plans, specifications, reports, blueprints, and other documents detailing the alterations, sealed, and certified by a design professional, at the same time they are submitted to the local code officials. (b) The provision for heater and temperature requirements at N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.3 and the disinfection requirements at N.J.A.C. 8:26-4.8 shall apply to existing hot tubs and spas. (c) All existing hot tubs and spas shall comply with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, 15 U.S.C. §§ 8001 through 8007, which became effective on December 17, 2008.	Same as hot tub provision.
Maximum users	Maximum users are not specified pursuant § N.J.A.C. 8:26	The number of users per unit should be based on the maximum allowed, in accordance with the manufacturer's recommended specifications.