

POOL+SPA

WINTER 2018
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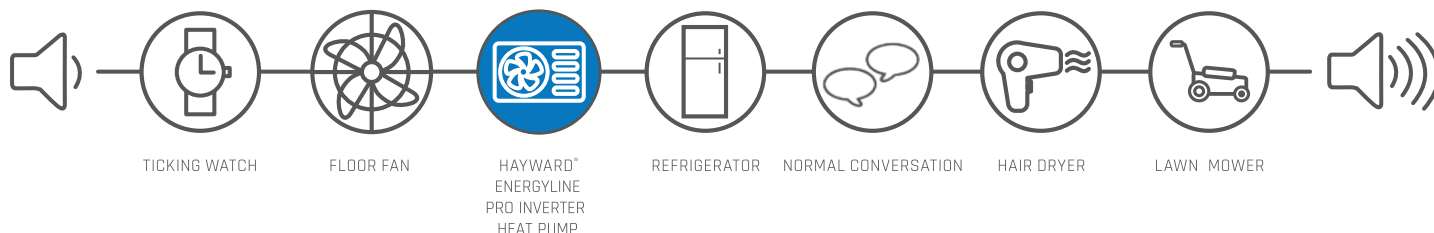
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FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Winter edition of *Pool+Spa*. This is supposed to be the calm season for the pool and spa industry over winter — but the fact is your business never sleeps. For one, the SPLASH! trade show and conference is only a few weeks away, providing industry members with the opportunity to get up to speed on the latest technologies and trends. As SPLASH! is a biennial event, it shouldn't be missed, because a lot has changed since 2016. Get online now and take a look at the comprehensive education program and exhibitor list for this year's show and start making your plans now. For those in southern locations, the chance to spend a few midwinter days on the sunny Gold Coast should be an additional enticement!

As I write this column, we've enjoyed an unseasonably warm autumn, with little in the way of significant rainfall in many regions of Australia. While it may make for pleasant days outdoors, the impact of extended summers and little rainfall will be significant in the long run, as the recent Cape Town water crisis has shown. Read our article from environmental scientist and pool builder Luke Yewen to see what this means for our industry.

While things theoretically slow during winter, it's the time for home owners to think ahead and start planning for a summer spent by the pool. We've got some great content in this issue on paving selection and landscape design to suit all seasons, so read on for inspiration and to be prepared when the enquiries start to roll in. Speaking of clients, if you haven't cultivated an unpaid sales force via a concerted effort to educate and inspire existing customers, you are missing out. Read on for tips to turn customers into raving advocates.

Finally, while Australia is few years ahead of New Zealand when it comes to pool fencing regulations, we haven't quite reached national consensus. Looking at the most recent turn of events across the ditch highlights what a difficult exercise it is to implement retrospective legislation in such a complex environment and

why building codes are rarely a 'one-size-fits-all reality'.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the magazine.

All the best,
Dannielle Furness
Editor



ACROSS THE DITCH

POOL AND SPA FENCING IN NEW ZEALAND



We've been through the same thing here, now the pool fencing saga is playing out in New Zealand.

New pool safety legislation came into effect in New Zealand on 1 January 2017. The *Building (Pools) Amendment Act 2016* repealed the *Fencing Swimming Pools Act 1987* and inserted provisions relating to residential pool safety into the *Building Act 2004*.

According to the Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE), key changes to the code included:

- residential swimming pool barriers must be inspected every three years;
- safety covers will be used as barriers for spa pools and hot tubs; and,
- territorial authorities will have better tools to enforce pool barrier requirements, including notices to fix and infringement notices.

Provisions in the building code included clause 162C (1), which deems that residential pools (filled or partly filled) must have means of restricting access — via a physical barrier — by unsupervised children under five years of age. Clause 162C (2) states that the means of restricting access must comply with the current code requirements, or those that were in force at the time of construction or installation (post 1987).

This probably seems fairly straightforward, not to mention familiar. Unfortunately — as is often the case with retrospective legislation — the implementation hasn't exactly been smooth sailing. There's been conjecture over 'short cuts' and 'loopholes', a couple of backflips and a whole lot of complaining as industry, government and water safety groups try to reach some sort of consensus.

While the new Act requires territorial authorities to inspect pool fences, it also allows regions to waive or modify building code requirements. The intent here is for authorities to exercise judgement when dealing with 'unusual compliance conditions'.

What is a suitable physical barrier?

In February this year, local NZ news website stuff.co.nz reported that in the 12 months

since the new Act came into effect, MBIE had received 25 waiver applications that nominated automatic covers as a suitable physical barrier to swimming pool access. Had 23 of the 25 waiver applications not originated in one council district, the trend may not have been immediately apparent.

The bulk of the applications came from Marlborough District Council, which said it had sought clarification from MBIE on the use of electric safety covers versus fences. The council said it had received no signal to suggest this was an unsuitable solution, so continued to submit waiver applications in the same vein. The crux of the issue here is the subjective nature of the process — what inspectors in one district determine to be a reasonable modification won't necessarily be seen that way by others. One man's 'unusual compliance conditions' are not the same as another's, if you like.

At this point, Water Safety NZ (WSNZ) stepped in and suggested the only acceptable form of barrier was fencing and that the inclusion of pool covers as an alternative threatened to introduce uncertainty because the practice is open to human failure. As five children under the age of five had died in preventable deaths since the legislation came into effect, WSNZ said that allowing pool covers as an alternative to fencing was effectively a 'short cut' that introduced unacceptable risk and should be banned.

Covers banned

By late March, the use of automatic pool covers without fencing was banned nationwide, with MBIE ruling the practice as non-compliant with the building code. MBIE said that a compliant pool fence with automatically closing gates or door alarms presented less risk than the use of an automated pool cover. This is because the pool cover could be left open — even if only temporarily — when a supervising adult was not present. Given that the overriding intent of building code changes was to prevent injury or death to young



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children in residential pools, MBIE deemed the increased risk associated with (fence-less) pool cover use as incompatible with that overall objective.

Predictably, not everyone was happy with the outcome. In Marlborough, 200 affected pool owners will have to apply for building consent to install a compliant barrier. For those with expired exemptions, that is an immediate requirement and, for those with as-yet-unexpired waivers, a compliant installation must be in by the expiry date (which can be between five and 10 years).

For those with an immediate issue, the council suggested a range of remedies including putting up a temporary barrier and draining pools to 400 millimetres or less. The latter of these presents an additional problem, as it potentially creates a drop of more than one metre. Not only is this also unallowable under the building code, it represents an even greater safety risk, according to industry members. Temporary measures aside, home owners with expired waivers have only 90 days to comply.

Industry members suggest that planned pool installation projects have been cancelled in the wake of the ruling and that home owners fear their property value will go down because of the fencing requirement. The NZ Pool Industry Association (NZPIA) thinks the MBIE has gotten it wrong and that the determination should have been challenged by Marlborough District Council.

The devil is in the detail

According to NZPIA, the devil is in the detail... because the Building Act does not explicitly rule out the use of covers as a barrier, it believes they should be allowed. Some industry members feel that the 'human failure' argument isn't justified, as an adult is equally capable of leaving a pool gate open as they are of not covering a pool. Faulty and inoperable gates also represent a notable risk, so can't be deemed 100% failsafe. In justifying the issuing of waivers, Marlborough District Council said that no children have drowned at locations where automated pools covers are installed since the practice commenced.

There are calls to make determinations on a case-by-case basis, given that every pool installation is different.

When discretion fails

Compounding an already complex and contentious issue is the recent discovery by Whangarei District Council (WDC) that many previously approved fencing installations are actually non-compliant.

This came to light when a home owner sought certification on a property being sold. The inspection found the pool fence didn't meet with code, despite having previously been approved. This prompted the council to conduct a random audit, which saw 10 of the 11 inspected properties failing. Council said it was likely the

fault of inspection officers 'using more discretion than was likely appropriate', again highlighting limitations with an essentially subjective process.

There are over 1200 privately owned pools in the district, many of which will undoubtedly be recognised as non-compliant.

WDC plans a complete review of its database and reassessment of fencing installations — starting with pools seen as 'higher risk'. It also reminded pool owners of their own obligations and encouraged self-inspection with a focus on vegetation growth and changes to buildings, ground level or surrounding gardens.

Size matters

So, pools must be fenced. End. Of. Story. Or is it? Clause 162C (3) of the Building Act says, "In the case of a small heated pool, the means of restricting access referred to in subsection (1) need only restrict access to the pool when the pool is not in use."

This means that spa pools, provided they are 760 mm above the ground and have a surface area of less than five square metres, don't need a fence, but are required to have a lockable cover in place when they are not in use. Any pool that extends beyond five square metres and is deeper than 400 mm is automatically recognised as a pool, regardless of whether it is 760 mm above the ground. This means the fencing rule applies.

Early days

The legislation may have come into effect in January 2017, but most of the issues outlined in this article have come to light within the last three months, which serves to remind what a complicated undertaking this is... and we've only looked at the nuts and bolts of implementation.

As an initiative designed to save lives, the focus often moves to seemingly secondary issues — like aesthetics and property values. We're a little further down the track in Australia, pretty much at the point where seeing an unfenced pool is akin to watching someone light up a cigarette in the office or a restaurant — once commonplace, but now unthinkable. Hopefully the dust will settle in NZ and consensus be achieved. If it only saves one child's life, it has to be worth the trouble.



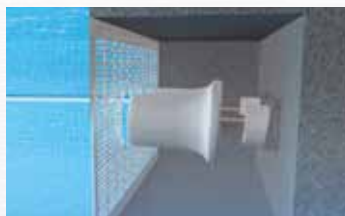
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MAKING WAVES



Swimming is officially Australia's number one sport

New research from Roy Morgan finds that swimming is the number one sport in Australia, in terms of participation rates. Data shows that over six million Australians have swum either regularly or occasionally over the last three months, beating jogging, cycling, golf and tennis to the top spot.

The research was aligned to the upcoming Commonwealth Games being held on Queensland's Gold Coast, but these are encouraging numbers for the pool industry.

Research being what it is, participants have been grouped by demographic, psychographic and behavioural traits, with the bulk coming from three groups as classified by Roy Morgan's Helix Personas segmentation tool. It found that swimmers are most likely to fall into one of the following categories:

Metrotechs — Young, single, well-educated, inner-city professionals with high incomes, typically renting apartments. Cultured, connected, clued-in and cashed up.

Aussie Achievers — Closest to the average Australian, these young, educated, outer suburban families are working full-time to pay off their expensive separate house.

Leading Lifestyles — High-income families that typically own their own home in the inner suburbs.

Of the 6,025,000 regular or occasional swimmers, 3.45 million were women and 2.58 million were men.

A night of legends

The recent Legend Products & Services trade training night has been hailed a success, with over 60 builders, service techs and other industry members getting the lowdown on all the latest products, including technical data and useful sales information.

Four presenters took the stage, including Steve from ICH Roboter Australia, who presented features and benefits on the full product range, as well as future market plans.

Hayward Pools Australia was represented by National Sales Manager Shawn Sucrrah and District Sales Manager Sam Thorsen, who gave a fascinating presentation on variable speed pumps and how the Power Affinity Law can provide customers with a better understanding of the benefits of operating pumps at lower speeds.

A quick dinner break was followed by Justin from Naked Pools, who explained the advantages of the company's new freshwater system, including environmental benefits and the easy set-up and operation. Justin covered the new NKD1 Hybrid swimming pool system, which releases silver and copper ions into the water and — with the addition of oxidation — provides healthy, crystal clear fresh water.

To round out the night, Tony and Adam from Evoheat discussed the benefits of the company's range of heat pumps including the company history, how the products work and the key selling points.

David Webber, Managing Director of Legends, was thrilled with the turnout.

"A big thank you to all the people that turned up to our trade night. To get over 90% of invitees was a great result and one that we are very proud of. We were overwhelmed by the response and all the kind words hailing it such a huge success," he said.

Sales Manager Denis Riordan agreed.

"The general consensus from attendees was 'finally, a trade event where we learned a lot'. That made David and I proud and inspired us to continue doing great things for both new and existing customers. It just shows you that if you listen to your customers, training and information nights like this will work in every way," he said.



Thinking of hiring?

If you're thinking of hiring, you could do worse than consider the Youth Jobs PaTH program.

Youth Jobs PaTH (Prepare-Trial-Hire) is an initiative from the Australian Government. It's a flexible program designed to make it easier to find and recruit motivated people aged between 17 and 24.

Potential candidates undertake the government's Employability Skills Training to better prepare them for work. Employers then trial potential employees in an internship of four weeks to three months. You don't need to pay wages for the duration of the internship and will even receive a \$1000 payment (including GST) to cover the cost of hosting. Interns receive a \$200 fortnightly incentive payment (on top of their income

support) and are covered by insurance, both paid by the Australian Government. If you do go on to hire an eligible young person at the end of the internship, you can receive up to \$10,000 to assist with wage and training costs.

To get started, you'll need to register on the jobactive website and advertise your trial job, or get support from an employment services provider to help arrange a trial. If you need further assistance, phone the Employer Hotline on 131 715.



ACCC won't oppose Zodiac and Fluidra deal

Following the recent clearance granted in New Zealand, Australia's competition watchdog has announced it will not oppose the Zodiac/Fluidra merger.

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) found that although the merger will deliver a company with significant market share in some products — including pool pumps, filters, water treatment, cleaners and automation systems — there is still sufficient competitive constraint from remaining competitors in the market.

"Any deal that combines two of the largest suppliers in an industry requires close scrutiny from the ACCC. We spoke to a range of customers and other industry participants and most of them believed that several strong competitors remained," ACCC Commissioner Roger Featherston said.

"A combined Zodiac and Fluidra would continue to face competition from remaining global players, who have a full range of products available in Australia and are able to expand. The ACCC also found that there are other local competitors and specialist manufacturers in particular pool equipment segments," Featherston said.



\$75 million earmarked for Parramatta Aquatic Centre

Up to \$75.2 million will be invested in the construction of a contemporary aquatic leisure centre for Parramatta after Council endorsed the business case for the new facility, to be built in the Mays Hill precinct of Parramatta Park.

The centre is set to feature indoor and outdoor heated pools, along with other facilities including a fitness centre, sauna and spa, a cafe and other spaces for the community and swim club.

"The new aquatic centre is a crucial piece of social infrastructure for Parramatta. This will involve a significant investment from Council but once complete the centre will service our city for generations to come, so it's important that we incorporate all the facilities our growing community will need, now and in the future," City of Parramatta Lord Mayor Andrew Wilson said.

"This was a big decision for Council, made after extensive consultation undertaken by both Council and Parramatta Park Trust. We know that the community expects a modern, flexible facility and the model we have chosen for the centre will deliver this for the people of Parramatta," Wilson said.

The option endorsed by Council will include a 10-lane, multipurpose 50 m outdoor pool and an outdoor leisure pool, along with a 25 m indoor pool and dedicated indoor Learn to Swim pool with an adjacent all-abilities water play zone and a dedicated shallow-water space for babies and toddlers. All of the pools will be heated and the 50 and 25 m pools will include access ramps.

There will also be modern family-friendly change rooms and amenities, outdoor areas for relaxation and a 212-space surface car park.

The NSW Government has already committed \$30 million to the project and the City of Parramatta will seek additional funding for the construction of the aquatic centre to achieve a world-class facility.

"We thank the state government for their commitment to this important project and look forward to working with them and Parramatta Park Trust to ensure the aquatic centre is complete and operational as soon as possible," the Lord Mayor said.

"Now that the preferred model for the aquatic leisure centre has been confirmed we will proceed to the detailed design phase and it's expected the design master plan will come back to Council for endorsement later in the year as part of the development application for the new centre."

The new aquatic leisure centre will be built adjacent to Park Parade, near the corner of Pitt Street on the former golf course in Mays Hill, after the site was identified as the preferred location in Parramatta Park Trust's Mays Hill Precinct Master Plan.

It is expected that construction of the new aquatic leisure centre will commence in February 2019 and be complete by mid-2020, based on the current timeline for the project.

MAKING WAVES

How to safely install swimming pool and spa bonding

The Queensland Government's Electrical Safety Office has issued the following information on swimming pool and spa bonding for installers.

There are specific requirements for equipotential bonding of steel reinforcing when working on concrete swimming pools and spas. If an electrical fault occurs, even at low voltage, while the pool is in use, it may lead to electrical shock, which can cause muscle spasms and potential drowning.

Clause 5.6.2.6.3 of the Wiring Rules states equipotential bonding conductors are to be provided to any fixed extraneous conductive parts of a pool structure, including the reinforcing metal of the pool shell.

Installing electrical contractors should adhere to Note 2 of Clause 5.6.2.6.3. This states that conductive tie-wires used during construction of reinforced concrete pools are considered to be an adequate electrical bond between the conductive reinforcing components. Provided the reinforcement is satisfactorily electrically connected together, one point of connection of the bonding conductor is satisfactory where bonding is required by Clause 5.6.2.6.2(a).

To satisfy this clause you must either:

- confirm the entire reinforcing is electrically continuous, in which case a single bonding conductor can be attached at a suitable location, or
- identify each section that is not electrically continuous and ensure each section is effectively bonded.

Either installation option can only be achieved through a visual examination of the reinforcing and by carrying out resistance measurements at various points. These tests can only be effectively carried out before the concrete is poured or sprayed.

Some installers have tried to avoid the need to have an electrician attend before concreting by leaving a length of reinforcing out of the pool shell for the electrician to later connect the bonding conductor. This practice is not safe as it does not allow the electrician to carry out tests to ensure the pool shell itself is effectively bonded.

In addition, attaching a bonding conductor from the pool structure to an earth electrode driven into the ground near the pool or spa does not satisfy the bonding requirements for swimming pools and spas.

Charges laid over swim school injury

A Victorian private swim centre operator has been formally charged by WorkSafe following a 2016 incident in which a primary school student was seriously injured during swimming lessons. The Department of Education and Training (DET) has also been charged.

DET is charged with breaching the Occupational Health and Safety Act for failing to ensure students were not exposed to risk arising out of a school-sanctioned swimming program. The operator, De Kort Enterprise trading as Swim and Survival Academy, was charged with failure to ensure the swimming centre was safe.

An investigation of the November 2016 incident has concluded with charges filed in the Melbourne Magistrates' Court and will be listed for hearing in Ballarat.

Mandatory pool and spa fencing inspections for Victoria

It seems SPASA Victoria's lobbying has paid off, with a recent announcement that retrospective pool barrier laws for the state have been abandoned. Last year the Victorian Government declared its intention to legislate retrospective barrier laws, requiring owners of pools and spas built prior to 2010 to rebuild safety barriers. The intent was to prevent pool or spa access via a door from a building, such as a house or garage. Retro works were given a deadline of 2020 for completion.



SPASA Victoria condemned the decision, accusing the government of ignoring both evidence and industry advice, thereby missing the point entirely when it comes to drowning prevention. CEO Brendan Watkins said there was evidence that backyard pool drownings occurred due to a lack of maintenance to existing barriers, not because older pool barriers were less safe.

The association said the only way to ensure appropriate maintenance is carried out was through the introduction of mandatory pool fencing inspections and vowed to continue lobbying.

In the days following the abandonment of proposed barrier laws, the Victorian Government announced the introduction of a mandatory pool and spa barrier inspection program, much to the delight of SPASA Victoria.

The legislation will be introduced to parliament in June this year, with the register and inspection regime due to be in place by the 2019 summer season. Under the scheme, households will need to register spas and pools with local council and declare barriers compliant.



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MAKING WAVES

Drowning detection systems — new global standard developed

The International Organization for Standardization (ISO), Geneva, has published a standard for technology used in public pools to detect drownings.

Maytronics Australia, maker of the Poseidon Drowning Detection System, has welcomed the release of the new global standard.

"The importance of this technology cannot be understated," said MD Dan Kwaczynski.

"Considering what this technology is required to do — which is detect a drowning person within seconds — it is imperative that the technology available to the global market actually does the job.

"Maytronics has invested \$30 million and 20 years of research and development in this type of technology and our system, Poseidon, which is installed in over 250 public pools worldwide and has saved more than 30 lives already.



"I'm happy to say that Poseidon well and truly meets the global standard," said Kwaczynski.

"Unfortunately, we have seen other products used overseas which have not performed, with government authorities having to replace the entire system at considerable expense.

"There are thousands and thousands of lines of intricate computer coding and algorithms behind the Poseidon system, which enables it to detect someone drowning and activate the alarm in time for a lifeguard to make the rescue.

"It is crucial that lifeguards at public pools can rely on the accuracy of the system they are using. What you don't want are frequent false alarms, which often lead to lifeguards disabling the system out of frustration," he said.

The new standard is a useful tool for government or commercial businesses involved in a drowning detection system project and can be used as a reference for any new tender specifications.

ISO 20380:2017 describes the minimum operational, performance and safety requirements and test methods for computer vision systems used to detect drowning accidents in public and commercial pools.

It does not apply to the systems used in domestic swimming pools and pool basins with a surface area of less than 150 m².

The standard defines performance commitment (performance of detection) and a formal test procedure.

A copy of 'ISO 20380:2017 Public swimming pools – Computer vision systems for the detection of drowning accidents in swimming pools – Safety requirements and test methods' can be found here.



Adelaide pool and spa expo bounces back

SPASA Australia has declared the recent Pool Spa and Outdoor Living Expo in Adelaide a success. With an objective to increase exhibitor numbers and enhance the visitor experience, SPASA handed the reins to events company AEE and said the decision proved wise.

Over 50 companies exhibited at the event — including 15 new exhibitors — giving visitors a much broader product range to view. Other changes included the addition of free seminars and a new floorplan layout, which saw visitors spending more time engaging on exhibition stands.

SPASA said pool builders were kept busy taking bookings for site inspections and follow-up quotes, with spa companies reporting a high level of on-site sales at the show.

Seminar sessions were well attended, with the two busiest being 'The A-Z of Buying a Pool or Spa' and 'Choosing the Right Pool'. Other sessions that focused on technology for maintaining pools and energy savings were also well received and reflected the desire from consumers to do their research before they purchase.



\$1m earmarked for aquatic centre upgrade

The Sans Souci swimming pool in Sydney's south is the latest aquatic centre to receive substantial funding for an upgrade. A \$1 million refurbishment will bring the 50 m pool back to International Federation standards, according to the Georges River Council website.

Works are due to kick off shortly and will incorporate structural concrete repair, joint repair, re-waterproofing and new tiling. The toddler pool will also get some much-needed attention. Broken heaters and cracked tiles were among the identified issues raised by the Sans Souci Sea Devils Swim Club, saying that deteriorated standards overall needed to be rectified to entice the local community back.

The project is expected to reach completion in September this year, with the centre's 25 m indoor pool remaining open throughout.

Funding is via the NSW Government's Stronger Communities fund.

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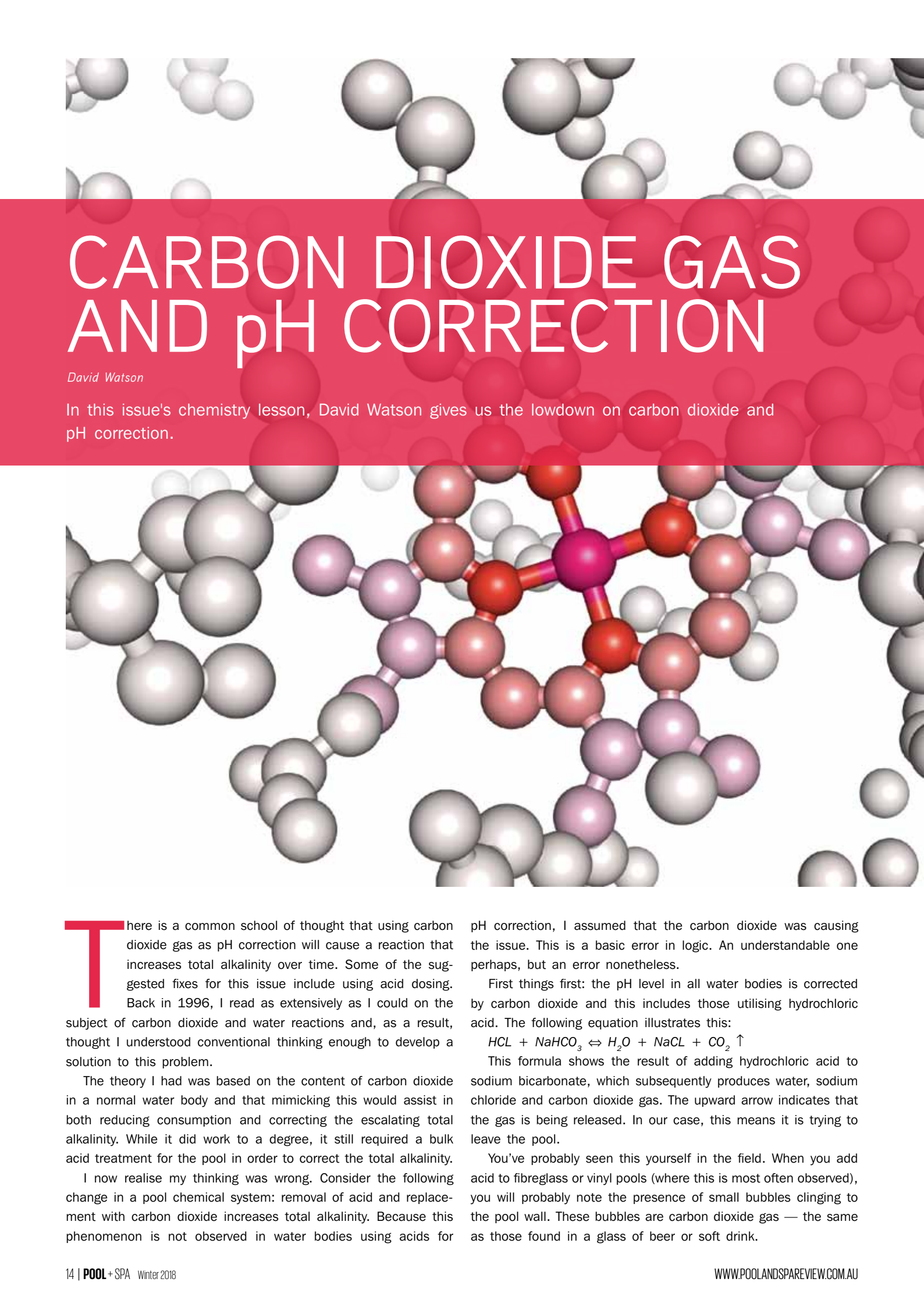
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CARBON DIOXIDE GAS AND pH CORRECTION

David Watson

In this issue's chemistry lesson, David Watson gives us the lowdown on carbon dioxide and pH correction.

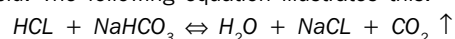
There is a common school of thought that using carbon dioxide gas as pH correction will cause a reaction that increases total alkalinity over time. Some of the suggested fixes for this issue include using acid dosing. Back in 1996, I read as extensively as I could on the subject of carbon dioxide and water reactions and, as a result, thought I understood conventional thinking enough to develop a solution to this problem.

The theory I had was based on the content of carbon dioxide in a normal water body and that mimicking this would assist in both reducing consumption and correcting the escalating total alkalinity. While it did work to a degree, it still required a bulk acid treatment for the pool in order to correct the total alkalinity.

I now realise my thinking was wrong. Consider the following change in a pool chemical system: removal of acid and replacement with carbon dioxide increases total alkalinity. Because this phenomenon is not observed in water bodies using acids for

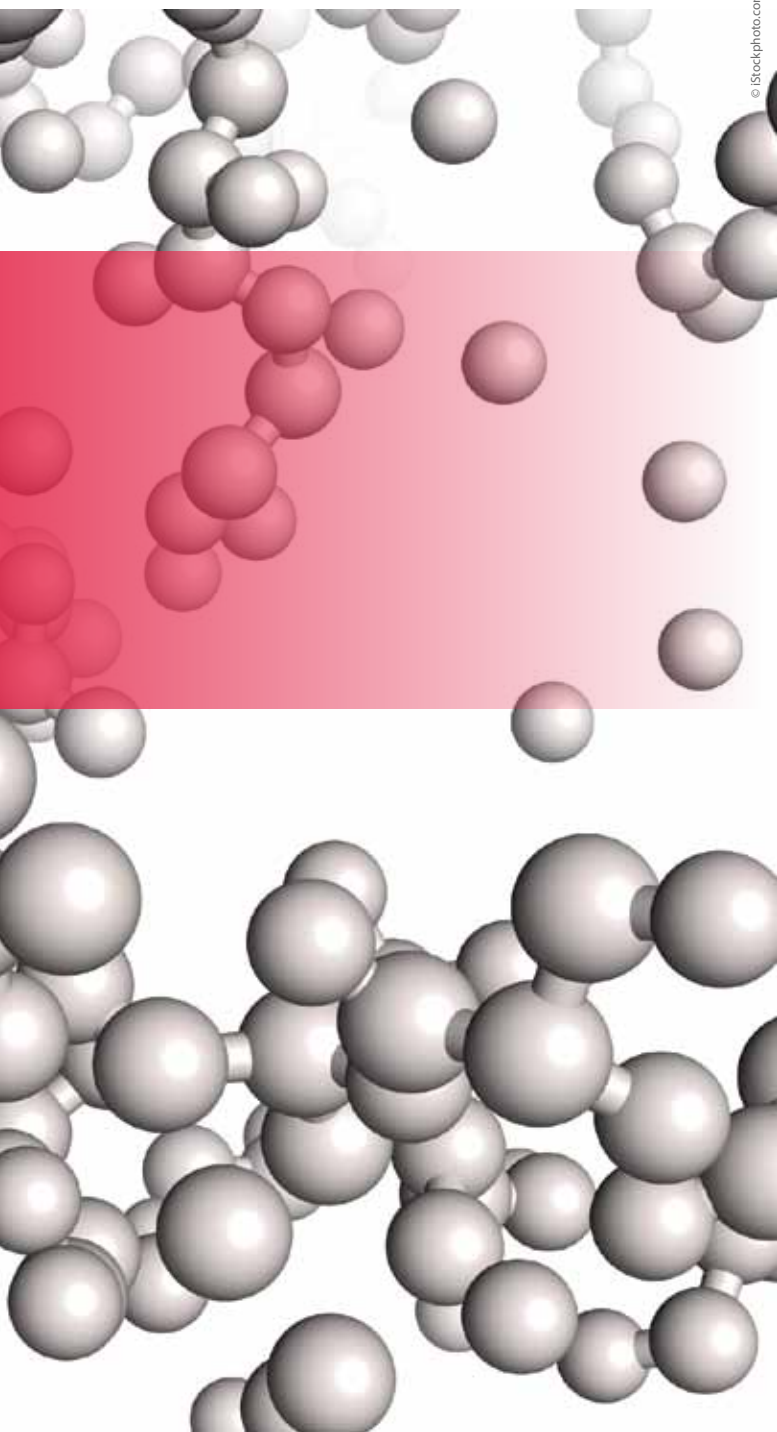
pH correction, I assumed that the carbon dioxide was causing the issue. This is a basic error in logic. An understandable one perhaps, but an error nonetheless.

First things first: the pH level in all water bodies is corrected by carbon dioxide and this includes those utilising hydrochloric acid. The following equation illustrates this:



This formula shows the result of adding hydrochloric acid to sodium bicarbonate, which subsequently produces water, sodium chloride and carbon dioxide gas. The upward arrow indicates that the gas is being released. In our case, this means it is trying to leave the pool.

You've probably seen this yourself in the field. When you add acid to fibreglass or vinyl pools (where this is most often observed), you will probably note the presence of small bubbles clinging to the pool wall. These bubbles are carbon dioxide gas — the same as those found in a glass of beer or soft drink.



As the carbon dioxide gas leaves the pool, the pH rises, which then calls for the addition of acid. Adding more acid destroys the sodium bicarbonate, which leads to a decreased total alkalinity and a lower pH overall. To correct the decreased total alkalinity, we add buffer and the cycle repeats itself.

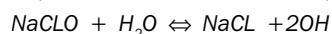
It's worth stopping here to appreciate this concept as it is a cornerstone of pool chemistry, something we see every day and make our living from: acid destroys the buffer to create carbon dioxide to control pH.

It isn't just pools — natural water bodies contain carbon dioxide as well, but they hold the CO_2 at equilibrium with the atmosphere.

As one of the more commonly used chemicals in pH correction applications, the chemical properties and reactions of sodium hypochlorite deserve a look. Sodium hypochlorite is a yellow liquid with a pH of about 13.00. Reacting chlorine with sodium hydroxide produces sodium hypochlorite. Chlorine wouldn't store without it and would be degraded to near-useless levels prior to

even being delivered to store. The chemical formula for sodium hypochlorite is NaClO .

So, if we add NaClO and water, we see the following outcome:



This suggests that adding sodium hypochlorite to water will (eventually) result in salt sodium chloride (table salt) and hydroxide. Does this mean sodium hypochlorite on its own will push the pH up as hydroxides have a very high pH?

It might be time to do an experiment and this one is simple enough to conduct. You'll need a bottle of distilled or de-ionised water, a small container, some household bleach and a way to measure pH.

1. Add some water to the small container and measure the pH level.
2. Add 2–4 drops of household bleach (4% sodium hypochlorite) and give it a good mix.
3. Measure the pH level.

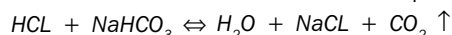
Depending on the amount of water and the amount of bleach added, the pH level will rise significantly comparative to the amount added. From this we can accept that sodium hypochlorite increases pH. This is important because it's contrary to common thinking that carbon dioxide is responsible for increased pH levels. What's worse is that this is what we learn within the first year of working on a retail store floor in the pool industry: the pH.

So, if the chlorine increases the pH, why does it only happen when carbon dioxide is used to correct the pH? It's because carbonic acid (the acid made with carbon dioxide gas) is not a very strong acid and it creates as much total alkalinity as it destroys, which means there is no excess hydrogen ion.

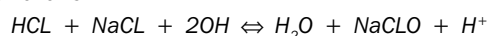


The above equation illustrates the first stage reaction. It shows a spare hydrogen molecule, but that molecule combines with the bicarbonate and works back to create carbon dioxide gas. This reduces the pH and attempts to gas off the water body again.

If we revisit the acid to bicarbonate equation:



This time we will replace the NaHCO_3 (the sodium bicarbonate) with the hydroxide OH from the chlorine reaction, and it resolves as follows:



This equation suggests the hydroxide is neutralised by the acid and a spare hydrogen ion is left over (to combine with the bicarbonate ion and create carbon dioxide to suppress the pH).

I hope this helps give a clearer understanding of the chemistry involved in treatment of the water with carbon dioxide and a little insight into why conventional thinking may not always be correct.

Shenton Aquatic
www.shenton.com.au

The Dark Ages

When you hear the term 'The Dark Ages', does it conjure up images of the gothic, of knights, serfs and lords? It's a term rarely used now by historians because of the value judgement it implies — a time of intellectual darkness and a scarcity of information.

It can be said that we've lived through our own dark age in pre-digital days — the time before internet and touchscreens, the days of phones with cords and letter writing that required a pen, paper and postage.

As information is now so freely available and a part of our everyday lives, we forget that Facebook was only launched in 2004, Samsung's first smartphone in 2009 and the iPad in 2010 — a mere eight years ago. With so much information to light our way out of the digital dark ages, it should be easy to answer every question and deliver on the clear expectations of our customers and staff.

The Internet of Things (IoT) is now standard technology for new product launches. Voice control is common for everyday interactions, controlling lighting, heating, music and other services. Siri, Alexa and OK Google are common phrases uttered in our homes and vehicles. It is reported that most software will have some form of artificial intelligence (AI) by 2020 and there is already an 'AI arms race' between US and China. This begs the question: how do businesses deal with the technology expectations and the demand for improved service?

In an ever-changing, information-saturated, tech-savvy environment, two simple business coaching questions often shed light towards the right path: 1) What is my customer expecting? and 2) How do I deliver on that expectation?

There are over 2.25m SMEs in Australia. According to the ABS, in 2016 only 3% employed more than 20 people. 27% had four or fewer employees. How can you — as a leader with limited resources — deal with the dark forces of increased customer expectation?

Businesses are often defined by the issues they solve not the products they sell. Great customer service revolves around two-way communication, to explore and discover what the true expectations are. Is it about the new shiny phone app to operate the home and pool or is it really about the idea of



more leisure time? Real-time solutions are often easier to provide face to face. Human contact still plays a crucial role. In 2016 a report from Accenture Strategy, 'Digital Disconnect in Customer Engagement', showed that 77% of surveyed individuals want human interaction when they need guidance. The information age provides everything you need to know if you have the right questions.

Leaders understand that technology can both enhance and distract from delivering on expectations. A focus on technology, culture and training will help efficiently deliver on customer needs, but expertise and reasoning through face-to-face contact is still in high demand.

The same principles apply to your own business — what are your team's expectations?

Employees are more informed and increasingly looking for a great work culture. Flexible hours, work-life balance, parental leave, career path development and social responsibility are common enticements from firms looking to attract talent. Are you setting clear expectations for your team and do you have a listening ear on their expectations?

The 2016 ABS census found that around 25% of tradespeople worked over 50 hours per week, yet the Australian average is 33 hours. In a seasonal business, fatigue can have a huge impact on productivity. A US defence research project on fatigue and cognitive performance found that a 20% fatigue level is equivalent to 0.05% blood alcohol level. Productivity, objectivity and creativity are desired traits from high-performing teams, but how can they perform when stressed and tired? We're out of the digital dark ages and living in a time of constant change. Those changes bring opportunities to better serve your customers and lead your teams, but not if the human element is ignored.

Lindsay McGrath
CEO
SPASA Australia

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WHAT WE CAN LEARN FROM THE CAPE TOWN WATER CRISIS

Luke Yewen

Pool builder and environmental scientist Luke Yewen gives us his take on the impact of drought to the pool industry.

African news doesn't get much airplay in Australia, but the recent Cape Town water crisis is generated media interest around the world. How could this tourist gem — the jewel of Africa — simply run out of water? Is it lack of planning, bad management or bad luck? As I write this, the forecast is that the taps of Cape Town will run dry 16 April*.

Thanks to the crisis, Capetonians have become the most water-wise city dwellers in the world, slashing water use to 50 litres per person, per day — that's a four-minute shower.

There is apparently rising panic and residents are being encouraged to do in water wasters. Lawns and gardens are dying, cars are filthy, people are being asked to flush the dunny only sparingly and municipal swimming pools are closing.

So, where does this leave our pool-building buddies in Cape Town? Not in a good space, I'll wager. The water-saving rules state: "No filling (automatic or by hand) of private swimming pools with municipal water is allowed, even if the pool is covered. This includes the filling of new swimming pools and the refilling of existing swimming pools after repair work. The use of municipal water for portable swimming pools is also prohibited."

The National Spa and Pool Institute of Southern Africa has swung into action promoting 'water neutral pools' — you know the story: install a water tank, cover the pool, use bore water, recycle the backwash water.

All these initiatives are excellent, yet you've got to wonder how a new pool will be received when the neighbour's garden is dead and the house stinks because they're not allowed to flush the dunny.

So, what's the scoop and how did it come to this? Was everyone asleep at the wheel? It seems not, as a University of Cape Town

study has found that the drought is a one-in-a-thousand shot. The dams were overflowing in 2014 and no models predicted such an intense drought.

While Capetonians have adapted to being water-wise and the city has acted to introduce legislation and an education program to tighten water use down to a trickle, is it just bad luck? I don't think so, looks to me like climate change. It seems it's no longer a 'maybe' — it's real and it's here. The climate has changed, and will continue to do so.

In Australia, the CSIRO predicts that we will see hotter summers, longer droughts, less rain and more extreme weather events. In short, we will have less water, sometimes a lot less water. And guess what? We're going to need a hell of a lot more, with metropolitan populations expected to double by 2050 and the demand for water from agricultural and industrial sectors growing. Pressure to deliver water for the environment will also factor in. And don't think that desalination is the fix-all — with rising pressure on the energy sector, it's facing challenges as well.

As an industry, we need to get moving. If we want to survive a water-poor future, we need to act now. The pool and spa sector needs to be (what does Turnbull say?) agile and nimble. We need to spend money on this problem. We need innovation, we need data, we need to prove that pools can be a water-neutral asset or — even better — a water harvester. Unless we can do this, I'm afraid the industry will face tough times in the not-too-distant future.

**Note: Since this story was authored, day zero has been pushed back to 2019.*

SHAKE UP THE SEASONS



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LANDSCAPING FOR ALL SEASONS

Matt Leacy

Project by Landart, Image © Jason Busch



Matt Leacy, founder and creative director of Landart Landscapes, shares landscaping, styling and construction tips for creating the perfect outdoor space in cooler months.

"It's a great time to get outdoors and start landscaping for the cooler conditions," said Leacy.

"You don't want this time of year to signal a move indoors and less time spent in your outdoor spaces — you ideally want to adapt and tweak your spaces to make them right for the season and to keep maximising their potential," he said.

Warmth is key

"Fundamentally, landscaping in cooler months is all about bringing warmth into outdoor spaces — introducing features and elements that warm up the spaces to keep them inviting," Leacy said.

"One way to do this is to increase cover and protection so that wind and rain become less of a factor. You might look to introduce some enclosed walls around some key outdoor areas, especially the likes of outdoor living rooms, patio areas and outdoor kitchens, which often get used less in the cooler months.

"If you're considering built forms at the bigger end of the spectrum, backyard pavilions can be a great option, offering loads of covered space for tables, chairs, pots and plants — and lots of protection for outdoor entertaining.

"Covered pergolas, retractable awnings and gazebos can also be really good autumn additions — and you can style the space internally to inject warmth, and then rethink the look and accents as you move into other warmer seasons," he said.

Colours and materials

"You can also bring lots of warmth into your outdoor spaces by introducing warmer colours, especially browns, darker red, and blues. Neutral tones always complement the cooler months.

"Introducing timber is also a great way to enhance warmth and organic tone.



Project by Landart. Images © Jason Busch



“Exposed brick is another great material with an abundance of warmth and texture. And stacked firewood is one of the easiest ways to add the appearance of warmth, as well as serving a practical purpose when fire pits are used.

“You can also use plantings to team with the autumn theme. Deciduous trees provide some spark as everything else is turning — and something as simple as a beautiful red maple in a small courtyard can make a world of difference,” Leacy said.

Heating options

“Fire pits provide a functional and stylish way to warm your outdoor spaces and keep them suitable for entertaining and relaxation.

“The warmth and light generated by the pit means you can continue to make use of all your beautiful outdoor furniture pieces,” Leacy said. “They’re a great addition to a backyard, deck or patio and they’re far superior in ambience to portable heaters and lights,” he added.

“If you’re going to give a fire pit a go, it’s important to ensure that the style and size of the pit suits your outdoor space and aesthetic,” Leacy said. “The classic campfire atmosphere is always a hit, and there’s lots of different options on the market.

“You could have a fireplace or a built-in fire pit that doubles as a coffee table beyond the cooler months or just a basic iron or steel bowl — the important thing is to look at your outdoor space and consider what will work best for you in terms of functionality, budget and look,” Leacy said.



“In addition to a fire pit, I’d also consider installing some heating or strip heating in key outdoor entertaining and living areas — they will boost heat and keep the spaces inviting throughout the cooler months,” Leacy said.

Co-founder of Landart Landscapes, Matt Leacy has more than 20 years’ experience in design, construction and maintenance services across landscaping and pool installation for both residential and commercial properties. He is a qualified structural landscaper, designer and horticulturalist, and current board member — and former president — of the LNA Master Landscapers Association.

Landart Landscapes
landart.com.au



SPLASH! POOL & SPA TRADE SHOW

SPLASH! Pool & Spa Trade Show is on again from 1–2 August at the Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre in Broadbeach — surrounded by some of Australia's premier tourist attractions.

SPLASH! has grown to be the biggest show of its kind in the Southern Hemisphere. With over 2500 people attending the event and three different aquatic conferences forming the week, it encompasses all elements of the aquatic industry from residential to commercial planning, products and services.

Education and networking will be the focus of the event, with business representation from various countries and world leaders in the industry sharing their knowledge of products, services and keys to success.

SPLASH! will be operating in conjunction with the Swimming Pool and Spa Association of Australia (SPASA). SPASA sessions run will not only enable you to achieve CPD points to remain accredited but — along with the SPLASH! sessions — will give you many business tools to use to increase potential revenue for your business.

A great new initiative from SPASA, the inaugural 'Women in Leadership' program features some of the most influential women in the industry speaking candidly about their successes and what leadership means to them. This should be a truly inspiring event for all members of the industry.

While the program still caters to the residential sector, it has been expanded to incorporate the commercial domain, with the inclusion of the Aquatic Leisure Facilities Queensland (ALFA Q) conference. A site visit organised with Gold Coast City Council, Crystal Pools and Trisley Hydraulics will provide insight into both the build and commercial operation of the Commonwealth Games aquatics facility.

The SPLASH! Pool & Trade Show exhibition is sold out. Networking is an instrumental part of the event and there are several opportunities to mingle including Welcome Drinks, the SPASA National Awards Night and the Andrew Simons Memorial Golf Day.

Registrations for the event are now open at www.splashexpo.com.au.

SPASA Australia
www.spasa.com.au

HYDROSTAR PLUS PUMPS



Hydrostar Plus pumps are high performance thermoplastic pumps purpose built for aquatic facilities, water parks and large commercial swimming pools.

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PRODUCT PAVILION



POOL FENCING

Sentrel manufactures vertically tensioned cable balustrade and pool fencing in both classic timber and maintenance-free aluminium styles. The design incorporates marine-grade vertical cables and a contemporary aluminium system that can be ordered without a handrail, or a choice of handrail options — matching aluminium or timber. The system is fully compliant with Australian Standards.

By combining the stair and deck balustrade with gate and pool fencing options, Sentrel delivers a seamless, coordinated and contemporary poolside look. While the appearance is light, simple and stylish, the structure is strong and durable.

Pre-made panels facilitate fast and easy installation and the clean contemporary lines ensure that the view is uninterrupted. Sentrel balustrade and pool fencing complements timber, steel or concrete rendering, adding warmth to any design.

Sentrel Pool Fencing

sentrel.com.au

MINERAL WATER SYSTEM

Zodiac has added to the MagnaPool line with MagnaSpa. Developed specifically for spa applications, MagnaSpa features increased magnesium content to provide the bather with increased comfort. Gentle on the skin, the water additive promises to relax and rejuvenate spa users.

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Zodiac Group Pty Ltd

www.zodiac.com.au



POOL REMOTE MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Connect My Pool app from Astralpool Australia aids the daily management of aquatic facilities.

Pool owners and maintenance professionals can remotely monitor the operation of all pool components (filtration systems, water treatment, air conditioning, etc), as well as outdoor garden equipment (irrigation and lighting), via a Wi-Fi connection, the central Connect Box device and compatible pool and garden products.

Remote management delivers three advantages: tranquillity, comfort and savings. From the platform's mobile application, users can determine that pool equipment is working correctly and obtain control data such as chemical levels and energy and water efficiency.

The diagnostic tools provide professionals with constant monitoring of status, allowing them to visit the site only when a manual repair is necessary, avoiding installation deterioration and reducing costs associated with poor maintenance.

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POOLSIDE PAVING

SELECTION GUIDE *Carl Yench*

Today's building industry offers a wealth of choices for poolside paving, but there are key attributes you need to look for to ensure the most suitable option, delivering on both aesthetics and durability.

A couple of options have become particularly popular in recent times: hardy natural stone pavers — such as travertine, dense limestone, granite, quartzite, marble and bluestone — and 2 cm porcelain pavers. Both options are increasingly used in residential and public pool applications and (provided the selected paver meets certain criteria) can deliver a fantastic, long-lasting result. As naturally occurring materials, there are obviously geological forces at play that determine the quality of a paver, but the human element that guides selection and production of the finished product also pays a role. If certain standards in material selection and fabrication aren't met, the result can be a catastrophic failure.

When it comes to natural stone, longevity depends on two properties: density and water absorption. A low-density, highly porous stone will be prone to deterioration from salt, as deposits enter the stone's pores and form crystals, leading to internal weakening and exterior deterioration. The fundamentals are similar for porcelain, but the production process generally shows up the properties, thanks to laboratory testing of materials for compliance with various standards. By (somewhat ambiguous) definition, a porcelain tile is one with a water absorption rate of less than 0.5%, but there are additional considerations when assessing for longevity including body type, hardness and production quality standards.

Material selection incorporates many aspects — dimensional stability, production calibration, natural faults, surface finishing and functionality. The question is — how does the average Joe go about selecting paving materials that are going to last the distance?

There are a few ways to limit or reduce failure in both natural stone and porcelain paver applications without having an in-depth understanding of geology or tile manufacturing. By working with a good supplier, you can bypass the steep learning curve to access accurate information from the person whose job it is to grasp the nitty-gritty. These are some of the things you need to look for in a quality vendor:

Extensive knowledge and a good reputation

First up, make sure your supplier has an in-depth knowledge of the products they are selling, as well as the intended installation. Most good suppliers in the building materials industry need repeat business to survive and being a trusted source of information is key to bringing customers back. If a potential supplier doesn't know that soft limestone is unsuitable for use around a pool unless sealed with a penetrating hardener, customers are likely to have problems with their installation and never return. A good supplier is up to date on industry standards and best practices, as well as understanding the performance limitations of all paver materials.

Ask about quality management

Although it can be difficult to guarantee the quality of any material before it arrives on our shores, there are measures that an importer can implement to avoid issues. In the case of natural stone, ask your supplier if they have procedures in place to guarantee quality. For example, they may have an inspection agent in the country of origin. When it comes to porcelain, find out if the manufacturer has ISO 9001 certification. Having systems in place that ensure quality of a product protects the customer and separates the cowboys from the professionals.

You get what you pay for

As with most things in the building industry, price is a reflection of quality when it comes to paving materials. Sure, you could pick up pavers for \$40 m², but what are you really getting? Most likely a poor quality product that won't ever meet the needs of the application. If it seems too good to be true, it is! Carry out due diligence and ask why the product is so cheap (or expensive). Understanding the difference between a cheap product and a quality one could save thousands of dollars in repair costs if that product fails in application.

Europe Imports Pty Ltd
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HYDRO BAN from LATICRETE is a thin, load-bearing waterproofing/crack isolation membrane. A single-component, self-curing liquid rubber polymer that forms a flexible, seamless waterproofing membrane, it bonds directly to a wide variety of substrates.

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LATICRETE Pty Ltd

www.laticrete.com.au



POOL COVER ROLLER

Stylish and practical, the Daisy Under Bench Roller (UBR) range is now available in a powered option, as well as additional colour options.

The UBR is said to be a pool roller with a difference, transforming a roller into poolside seating and combining practicality with style. The range is available in four colours: Light Oak, Western Red Cedar, Silver Anodised aluminium and Charcoal Shimmer.

The rollers can be custom-made to any size and fitted with a solar-powered battery option, complete with remote control.

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CONTROLLED GROWTH WITH OPTIMUM WATER QUALITY



The Cityfit Swim School in Bathurst offers a valuable service to the local community. In operation since 1990, the school's mission is to deliver a competency-based 'learn to swim' program that enhances students' ability to have fun and survive in and around water.

The school's owner and operator, Gary Webster, decided that although water quality had always been good, constraints with the current treatment system would not support the increase in patronage and bather numbers that he was looking for. He began to research solutions and — after speaking with potential suppliers and other swim school operators — determined that a treatment plant upgrade would enable him to grow the business, while improving water quality. Webster elected to work with Tim Batt Water Solutions (TBWS).

TBWS assessed the current set-up and elected to arrange the installation of a UV system for chloramine removal, as well as a chemical control system upgrade to facilitate superchlorination and remote monitoring and control, as well as automated record keeping. Components included a Wallace & Tiernan Barrier M525 medium pressure UV system, a BECSys5 controller and PC software, as well as the BECSysNow! mobile app.

The UV system is designed for easy installation directly into the filtered water line going back to the pool. With horizontal or vertical

positioning options, it features 'light trap' stainless steel elbows on either side and a safety glass strainer immediately downstream. Since installation, Webster has reported a significant drop in chloramine levels — it now typically runs in the combined chlorine range of 0.2 to 0.6mg/L, well under the NSW Health maximum allowable level of 1.0 mg/L.

Webster also noticed an increase in pool water clarity coupled with a reduction in chlorine odour — both in the air and on bathers' skin after swimming. Analysis also shows that the ORP mV rate of disinfection has increased by 20–30 mV, meaning the chlorine is now working more effectively.

The chemical control system upgrade meant moving from a well-proven Strantrol controller to the same manufacturer's BECSys5 controller, as used at the Gold Coast Aquatic Centre in this year's Commonwealth Games. The controller provides pH, ORP mV, free chlorine and temperature readouts as standard with capacity for additional optional sensors that measure total/combined chlorine, TDS, turbidity, filter plant flow, pressure and vacuum. The BECSys5 also provides the ability to set up automatic superchlorinations at night if they are ever required.

One of the most useful and unique controller features is the inclusion of Ethernet connection via 'BECSys for Windows' PC



software and datalogging. The free software enables remote monitoring of the pool from connected computers or via a mobile device. Connection to a PC gives the added benefit of remote control of the Sys5 settings, including continuous graphing of all readings and events. This advanced automatic feature takes the form of a building management system graph, with the ability to zoom in on time/days and to customise reading and event data presentation.

Webster sees great potential for remote monitoring when he is away from the facility, allowing him to check current water chemistry levels at any time, from anywhere. He can easily remind staff to make changes if any are required, as well as convert system-generated email alarm notifications to text messages for mobile devices if necessary. Webster has found that the monitoring system is also reducing time required in the plant room by enabling constant and accurate pool condition data.

Investing in the latest equipment has delivered immediate efficiencies, giving Webster the opportunity to grow Cityfit Swim School while still delivering better water quality for patrons — a win-win situation for Cityfit and its clientele.

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SALTWATER CHLORINATOR

The XTreme saltwater chlorinator from Legend is designed and manufactured in Australia for use in both mineral and sodium salt pools. Equally suited to residential and commercial applications, the XTreme features an easy-to-read backlit display with brightness control.

Incorporating a self-cleaning cell as standard, the chlorinator also features super-chlorinate mode, spa mode, backwash function, salt measure and pump protection.

The XTreme is available in eight different versions ranging from 15 to 100 g, making it suitable for pools of all sizes. It comes complete with a four-year warranty on the power pack and a four-year or 10,000 h (whichever comes first) warranty on the cell.

Legend Products & Services

www.legendproducts.com.au



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The Conductor Hub provides an accessible connection and inspection point for equipotential bonding, making it easy for contractors to comply with standards and significantly lowering the risk of harm by electrical leakage.

The device can be installed by any licensed contractor, without delaying construction, and fulfils a mandatory electrical requirement in domestic and commercial settings. The concrete structure can later be earthed by an electrician through the Conductor Hub, allowing contractors to certify that an area has been sufficiently grounded, ensuring compliance with the wiring rules. The Conductor Hub is installed between the reinforcing steel before the concrete is poured and fits inside standard mesh without requiring any steel cutting to ensure structural integrity is maintained.

It is Australian made using recycled materials and available in multiple lid colours. It also comes with an installation sticker for inclusion in the metre box and an install record kept in the device itself. It incorporates a unique collar that can be sized to suit any concrete thickness.

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A LEGACY FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS



For Sue Jackson, head teacher of Lee Chapel Primary School in Essex, UK, ensuring primary school pupils were able to swim from an early age was a lifelong ambition. She was determined no student should ever leave her school frightened of the water.

When Sue first joined Lee Chapel back in 1999, only Year 6 children were able to go swimming, by which age some had already developed a phobia and refused to participate. She lowered the age at which children started attending lessons, but dreamed of opening a pool on-site so pupils could learn from as young as four. Her challenge was to find the funding for a 25 x 11 m commercial indoor swimming pool.

Following countless rejections for government and local authority support, the school community began fundraising in earnest. "It was the hardest thing we've ever tried to get money for. Normally for every 10 bids we submit, we get eight rejections. For the pool, it was higher," Jackson said.

In 2017 the school finally reached its target, engaging the services of commercial swimming pool specialists Gunton Swimming Pools and Hydrospec Engineering, who have worked as a partnership for over 30 years. The brief was to deliver a brand new, fully tiled 25 m indoor school swimming pool that could be enjoyed by pupils for years to come.

When it came to choosing the filtration equipment, Hydrospec immediately turned to Waterco products. "Whether specifying or installing, Hydrospec only recommends Waterco products due to their durability and pioneering design features — and has done so for many years," said John Cheek, managing director, Hydrospec.

Waterco partnered with Hydrospec to supply two SPDD1600 nozzle commercial filters with one Dual Pressure Gauge Panel, one Hydrostar Plus 7.5HP Commercial Pump and six Commercial Supa Skimmers.

Nozzle plate filters were used over the more conventional lateral commercial filters in order to produce a better standard of fluidisation and sanitisation. The filters can be used with a combination of in-depth filtration techniques, and a variety of media, to provide everything from sediment removal to the elimination of minerals and odours from pool water.

"The pool's flow rate is 100 m³/h/m² and the backwash rate is 30 m³/h/m², which is perfect for pristine filtration and to ensure complete fluidisation of the filter bed when backwashing," Creek said.

The filter media used is Waterco's EcoPure recycled glass media, which removes 30% more pollutants than sand media, is less susceptible to biofouling and reduces chemical treatment costs.

"EcoPure Glass media is a high-quality recycled glass that is fast becoming the preferred choice of many installers when looking for an alternative to conventional sand," said Tony Fisher, managing director of Waterco Europe.

The school's brand new £1.6 million, 25 x 11 m indoor pool was finally opened in July 2017. Thanks to Jackson's initial vision and the determination of the entire school community, pupils now have weekly swimming classes taught by experienced teachers and brand new safety equipment. The school has also secured a deal with swimming school Aqua Aims to hire the facility outside school hours, which will cover all maintenance costs.

"Together with parents and pupils, we have achieved something truly amazing that will benefit thousands of Lee Chapel pupils for years to come," said Jackson.

Waterco Limited
www.waterco.com.au

CONTRACTOR OR EMPLOYEE?

A VEXED QUESTION

Koula Stamatovski, General Manager Sales & Marketing

Incorrectly classifying a new worker as an employee or contractor comes with a slew of liabilities, so it's worth taking the time to understand the difference and getting it right from the beginning.

When a business considers engaging someone to perform work, often the decision is about whether to engage them as an employee or as a contractor. The decision is sometimes quite difficult and the difference has implications for items such as — yet not limited to — taxation, superannuation, control and liability.

What are the key differences between an employee and a contractor?

The Fair Work Act, the Australian Taxation Office and other legislation places controls on the engagement of both contractors and employees. To correctly determine whether a worker is an employee or a contractor, the whole working arrangement needs to be examined. For example, a worker is not automatically a contractor just because they have an ABN or specialist skills or you only need them during busy periods.

Some laws apply to both the employment and independent contract relationships

Often there is confusion (or incorrect assumption) with regards to what laws apply to employees and or contractors. It is important to understand that there is legislation that applies to both.

Risks: what if you get it wrong?

Organisations must take steps to become aware of the differences between an employment relationship and an independent contractor relationship. Failing to do so risks exposure to sham contracting and other breaches.

The employment relationship is more heavily regulated than a contractor relationship. This often results in breaching laws by incorrectly classifying an individual as a contractor when at law they are in fact an employee.

If you incorrectly classify an individual as an employee or contractor, you may be liable for:

- **superannuation charges**, where you have failed to make superannuation contributions for the benefit of the individual either because they are an employee at common law or because they are an 'employee' under the extended definition in the Superannuation Guarantee (Administration) Act 1992 (Cth);

- **additional payroll tax** (including penalties and interest), where you have incorrectly claimed contractor exemptions on payments made to employees (for which there are no exemptions available);
- **back pay** under a modern award or even an enterprise agreement, where you have incorrectly classified an individual as a contractor. As well as liability for back pay, there are penalties for breaching modern awards;
- **unpaid annual and long service leave**, where you have incorrectly classified an individual as a contractor. All employees are entitled to paid annual leave, and may be entitled to long service leave upon reaching the required number of years' service;
- **compensation for unfair dismissal** or for other prohibited conduct. Many employees have access to an unfair dismissal regime, and to other remedies where their employer acts to the detriment of the employee;
- **Fair Work Ombudsman penalties**: Fair Work Inspectors can seek the imposition of penalties for contraventions of sham contracting arrangements. The courts may impose a maximum penalty of \$51,000 per contravention.

Something that also needs to be considered are your obligations to your customers when you bring on other staff. An employee is part of your business and therefore you are responsible for the work that they do. If you choose to bring on a contractor, you need to ensure they actively support and promote your business as if they are an employee and that you ensure they have their own insurances and are adequately protected. In summary, there are different responsibilities and obligations for the treatment of staff and contractors. It's important to understand these differences, and to ensure that your legal obligations are covered in all circumstances.

Please note that the above information is provided as comment and should not be relied on as a substitute for detailed professional advice. If you would like additional information and support about the content in this document, contact AB Phillips.

AB Phillips provides expert insurance, financial services and people management solutions for business and individuals and is SPASA's preferred supplier of these services to its members.

AB Phillips
www.abphillips.com.au



FIBREGLASS POOL RANGE

Narellan Pools has released the Free Standing range, featuring swimming pool, plunge pool, lap pool and spa designs to suit every style and budget.

Particularly suited to sloping blocks or where budget is a consideration, the range offers an alternative to building large and expensive retaining walls, making the overall installation process quicker and simpler.

The Panama lap pool is designed with a single depth throughout and clear swim channels for continuous tumble turn swimming. It comes complete with a perimeter safety ledge and non-slip design.

The Grandeur Pool is skewed towards installs with generous land availability and features an elegant staircase design.

The Eden plunge pool comes in four lengths between 3.5 and 5.5 m, making it suitable for smaller backyards. Easy to maintain, the 3.5 m-wide pool uses less water and is cheaper to run and heat.

The Free Standing range comes in over 35 designs and 22 colours including Black Onyx, Silver Pearl, Grey Quartz and Whitehaven Pearl.

Narellan Pools Group

www.narellanpools.com.au



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The Eco-therm panel is manufactured by Aquatherm Industries, the number one panel company in the US, who have been manufacturing panels for over 40 years.

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PROJECT COMPLETE

GOING UNDERGROUND



In 2014 the University of South Australia (UniSA) embarked on a project to transform on-campus life for its students. Pridham Hall was planned as a state-of-the-art facility to encourage physical activity and to celebrate educational achievements. Featuring a sports complex, swimming pool and event facilities, development was made possible through a \$5 million donation from Andrew Pridham and the Pridham Foundation. Completion of construction was celebrated in a series of events during April 2018, with the gym and pool facilities officially opening to the public in May.

State Wide Pool Services (SWPS) was engaged to develop a 25 m, five-lane heated pool that lies below ground level in Pridham Hall's Adelaide CBD location. While a traditional formed and poured pool was considered, construction complexities and time constraints called for an alternate solution. In an Australian first, SWPS opted to construct a pool from prefabricated componentry supplied by US manufacturer Natatec. The pool is reinforced by buttressed stainless steel walls and features a curved ramp and exposed stainless steel edge. A custom-fit Natatec PVC membrane was tailored on-site, ensuring an attractive, watertight pool surface and affording a fast and efficient build.

Natatec is a flexible blanket of PVC featuring a strong polymer mesh fabric inner core designed specifically for commercial pool applications. It is suitable for all climates and weather extremes and resists algae and mould, delivering a long-lasting, durable membrane solution. With a replacement cycle of between 10 and 15 years, repairs are simpler, quicker and less expensive to achieve than with a traditional concrete tiled pool. There is little or no ongoing maintenance requirement

and a full replacement can be carried out over two weeks, versus the 10 to 12 required on a commercial pool retiling project.

Site space constraints made it difficult to determine a suitable balance tank location, but the surge control weir built into the Natatec solution negated the need for one. The pool also features a continuous perimeter reticulation system built into the gutter, delivering a low-maintenance, high-efficiency solution. The result is uniform distribution of clean, treated and heated water throughout the pool, with the added bonus of eliminating the need for buried piping around the pool perimeter. In another Australian first, the UniSA pool also uses a Natatec high-capacity stainless steel vacuum sand and pressure filter.

Customisation extends to the laser-cut PVC membrane UniSA logo which features in the centre of the pool — a less expensive and more precise solution than tiled alternatives. The certified slip-resistant GPM polymer grating has been engraved with a depth marker, safety symbols and lettering.

Sitting alongside UniSA's Jeffrey Smart Building, Pridham Hall's architecturally expressive design continues to transform Adelaide's West End and enhance the vibrancy of the City West campus. It is envisaged that the sports facility and pool will serve as a public drawcard, attracting a growing population to the precinct.

State Wide Pool Services
www.swps.net.au





DUAL SOLAR GENERATION AND POOL HEATING

The Heatseeker DualSun from Supreme Heating aims to cut pool running costs, thanks to its solar electricity generation and pool heating capacity.

The electricity generated by the high-efficiency photovoltaic (PV) cells can cover all swimming pool electricity needs including pool equipment and (in some cases) the heat pump. Surplus electricity can be self-consumed in the home or returned into the grid for a feed-in tariff or a net-metering program.

The internal heat exchanger allows direct connection to the pool's water circuit. Pool water is heated as it flows through the heat exchanger, while simultaneously cooling the panel and increasing the efficiency of the PV electrical generation.

Supreme Heating

www.supremeheating.com.au



MICRON COMMERCIAL FIBREGLASS FILTERS

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Setting new global benchmarks in durability, versatility, reliability and longevity, Waterco's Micron fiberglass filters are the preferred choice for commercial and industrial operations that demand superior water quality.

Micron commercial fiberglass filters are available in top mount, side mount and horizontal configurations from filter areas of 0.87m² to 10.0m².

Waterco can customise its fiberglass filters to meet specific requirements and comply to NSF and AS1210.

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- Optional vinyl ester tanks

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OUTDOOR ELECTRIC HEATERS

The Thermofilm Heatstrip Intense range of energy-efficient outdoor electric heaters includes a slimline, portable freestanding unit and a permanent wall- or ceiling-mounted option. Both are corrosion protected and IPX5 rated to prevent water ingress. Key features include: high-output 2200 W heater with instant heat-up carbon filament elements, in-built wheels for easy mobility (portable unit only), anodised alloy casing and end caps with powder-coated grill.

Intense Heatstrip outdoor heaters will heat an area of 9 m² in an outdoor enclosed area or 5 m² for an exposed outdoor area. They will comfortably heat a 14 m² indoor space.

The permanent outdoor model has flexible mounting options with a standard bracket that allows both ceiling and wall mounting at various angles, as well as suspension by chains or wires and metal rods. An optional flush-mount kit is also available. The portable model has easy DIY assembly and installation and simply plugs into a normal power point. A concealed power cable ensures its sleek appearance.

Thermofilm Australia
www.heatstrip.com.au



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PROJECT COMPLETE

PURE AND SIMPLE



One of the nine pools at Nirvana Spa in Berkshire.

Nirvana Spa in Berkshire is one of the UK's most prestigious spa facilities, frequented by elite athletes and celebrities. The facility has a reputation for using crystal-clear natural mineral water drawn from the same pristine source over 200 m beneath the spa. To maintain the purity of the water within each of its nine pools, the spa is using the latest ultraviolet (UV) disinfection systems from Hanovia.

The spa has a broad range of pools, including Roman and surf rooms, a plunge pool, a fitness pool, an outside pool and a hydrotherapy pool. Each has a specifically sized Hanovia UV system installed to treat the water, ensuring the high level of quality and disinfection required.

"The Celestial Floatation Pool, which is the UK's largest hydrotherapy pool, is unusual because it contains salt imported from the Dead Sea," said Neil Phelps, Nirvana's maintenance manager.

"We match the specific gravity of the Dead Sea. The high salt concentration makes objects very buoyant in the water and floating in the pool is perfect for spinal alignment. Bathers in the warm, mineral-rich waters are removed from most external stimuli and a gentle current gives the sensation of floating in space. This provides both mental and physical benefits and many sportsmen and women, including

international rugby players, skiers and rowers, use the pool to enhance performance and reduce injury time.

"UV disinfection systems allow us to run the chlorine at the right levels and there is no way we would be able to achieve the level of water purity without them. As the water temperature is kept at a constant 35°C, which is higher than in leisure pools, there is an increased risk of infection from microorganisms such as bacteria and moulds which thrive in warm water. Microbiological control is a key aspect of the water quality. UV plays an important part in that control and bacteriological checks are carried out regularly," said Phelps.

"Hanovia's UV systems enable us to achieve exemplary water quality in all of our pools. This, coupled with Hanovia's outstanding after-sales service, gives us, the maintenance team, the reassurance to maintain the high level of water quality and disinfection required," he said.

UV is highly effective at killing any bacteria, viruses or moulds in the water, including *Cryptosporidium* and its spores, which are chlorine resistant. This reduces problems associated with chlorine by-products such as chloramines, which are formed when free chlorine reacts with sweat or urine in pool water. Trichloramines in particular are powerful irritants which are responsible for eye and respiratory complaints and the unpleasant 'chlorine smell' commonly associated with indoor pools. It also means the water is much clearer than that found in traditionally chlorinated pools.

Each Hanovia UV system installed at Nirvana Spa consists of a stainless steel chamber containing a medium-pressure UV lamp housed in a special quartz sleeve to protect it from the pool water. The chambers are carefully designed by Hanovia engineers using advanced flow calculation methods. This ensures maximum performance by making sure all the water flowing through the chambers receives the correct UV dose. UV technology provides a low-maintenance alternative to other water treatment systems such as ozone.

Hanovia
www.hanovia.com



The spa is using the latest ultraviolet (UV) disinfection systems from Hanovia.

SMALL BUSINESS ACCOUNTING APP

Invoice2go is a mobile accounting app for small business. Users can issue invoices, track expenses and use reporting tools to manage cash flow while on the job. Choose from a range of customisable invoice templates to create and send documents via messaging apps or email. Access client account information and create a current statement at any time with a single tap. Invoice2go allows users to track expenses, see when a customer has opened an invoice, issue payment reminders and track their own profit and loss. It now includes mPOS functionality for mobile card payments.

Invoice2go

www.invoice.2go.com



POOL LADDERS AND RAILS

S.R.Smith has added new rail and ladder styles to its range, now offering more than 100 standard models suitable for both residential and commercial applications.

The range is available in a variety of colour finish options to blend with any environment. In addition to a standard powder-coated finish, buyers can opt for the SealSteel protective vinyl coating, which is available in six colours: pearl white, pewter grey, gloss black, light and dark blue, and beige.

Also on offer is SRS ClearShield, a transparent protective coating with good corrosion and scratch resistance properties. Most styles are available in standard and flanged models. A product catalogue, complete with AutoCAD drawings, is available on the website.

S.R.Smith

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Discretionary spending, SPASA and our industry

Spiros Dassakis, Chief Operating Officer, SPASA Australia



Discretionary spending has increased over the past few years, as consumers in Australia and the broader world economies prosper. While this is good news for the swimming pool and spa industry, it is also true for markets that compete for the discretionary dollar including boating, campervans, caravanning and holiday travel.

Estimates for the swimming pool and spa industry suggest there are between 1.2 and 1.4 million pools — along with half a million spas — currently constructed or installed in Australian homes. The industry is said to be worth more than \$1 billion per annum, with an additional \$500 million coming from associated sectors including portable spas, pool shops and other related service providers. Construction and installation growth data (where available) indicates a projected annual growth of 1.5% (that's 21,000 new pools and 7500 new spas). These figures are debatable, thanks to the fragmented planning reporting processes for each state and territory, but let's assume them to be a reasonable benchmark to work from.

By comparison, the campervan and caravan industry is worth approximately \$19 billion and growing. Total registrations for these types of vehicles over the 2017 period was 779,933 — 15,240 of those were new registrations. The boating industry employs more than 25,000 people and enjoys a reported turnover of \$8.28 billion per annum. In 2017 there were 16,000 new boat sales recorded.

So, it's easy to see that consumers are spending significantly more on discretionary purchases that we are seeing

directly in the swimming pool and spa industry. We must acknowledge that consumer demographics and trends are changing and that the marketplace is becoming smaller. These shifts present both challenges and significant opportunities for our industry.

As a strong industry and representative association, SPASA Australia has an important role in moving the industry forward. As a niche industry, we must continue to be innovative, competitive and attractive to new entrants, employees and consumers so we can continue to grow.

Importantly, we must also be unified in our resolution to work together for the benefit of the entire industry. It is no accident that the level of activity generated by SPASA Australia — on behalf of the industry — has been more pronounced since the merger into a single national body. As an organisation, SPASA Australia is excited by what lies ahead. It is committed to working closely with members and all stakeholders to not only build on recent success, but to also plan for the future. I have always said the best promoters of the swimming pool and spa industry are its members. We are all ambassadors and, as such, I would invite every SPASA member, every business and every stakeholder to:

Always promote and recommend credible industry members, businesses and organisations

Always project a positive message of the industry when speaking to consumers

Always support one another with advice and assistance

Always look to improve your skills and your knowledge through training and CPD

Always act professionally in every situation.

Lastly, always talk the industry up... because we have a lot to be proud of.

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WATER ANALYSIS

Clark Rubber has launched Filtrite Flow advanced water analysis. Supported by WaterLink SpinTouch technology, Filtrite Flow delivers results in only 60 s.

The technology provides comprehensive reporting, quickly giving pool owners and technicians all the information they need.

Users can have samples tested in-store and be provided with the guidance and chemicals needed to rectify any issues.

Clark Rubber

www.clarkrubber.com.au

EPOXY GROUT

SPECTRALOCK PRO Premium grout from LATICRETE is a patented, high-performance, epoxy grout that offers all the benefits of SPECTRALOCK PRO grout — colour uniformity, durability and ease of installation — but cleans off more easily and offers enhanced performance.

The non-sag formula is easy to install on walls and floors, resulting in flush grout joints. The grout is designed for use on tile, glass tile and stone applications, both residential and commercial. It can be used for both interiors and exteriors, and is suitable for re-grouting applications. Great for swimming pools, fountains and other wet area applications.

It is stain proof (in residential installations) to common household cleaners and liquids — spills should be cleaned immediately. SPECTRALOCK PRO Premium grout never ever needs sealing, keeping tile installations looking new for years.

LATICRETE Pty Ltd

www.laticrete.com.au



THE TOP 10

Reasons customers bought a Dolphin Robotic Cleaner

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10



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YOUR CLIENTS WON'T VALUE WHAT YOU DO...

UNLESS YOU EDUCATE THEM *Chris Newton*

Ever heard the phrase 'the more you tell, the more you sell'? When it comes to selling your creative ideas, it's the little things that count.

Allowing your clients to see you as someone who builds ordinary pools or provides ordinary landscaping means you will always be competing on price — working your heart out and attracting clients who expect the cheapest of everything and the low prices to match.

As a pool builder or landscaper your creativity should shine — not only in your designs, but in your ability to solve problems and to educate your clients. I know this from first-hand experience. Many years ago my wife and I decided to build a pool and landscape the surrounds. Not only did our builder produce a superb resort-style outcome for us, he constantly educated my wife and me on the small details that we may have missed.

He'd invite us to inspect the pavers first-hand, have us crouch down and then say, "You'll notice we've used a diamond cutter to cut these pavers so they fan out evenly in patterns. It creates a magic effect when it's done properly."

We'd then move to the timberwork and he'd be at it again, "Have a look under here at how my carpenter has checked in the timberwork. It'll be out of sight when the pool is filled, but you'll know the true craftsmanship that has gone into building your pool."

Nothing escaped his attention, or him bringing it to ours, "I have personally chosen the rocks used in the waterfall for both their size and shape and have placed them specifically to create the flow and splash patterns of a natural rainforest waterfall," he would say.

While every other builder may also do these things — use a diamond cutter to cut pavers precisely, insist on neat timberwork or hand-pick rocks — how many of them would take the time to point it all out to a client? These things might not seem special if you are doing them every day, but they are special to the client once they know.

Unsurprisingly, I went on to outline those 'special' details dozens of times over — to friends and colleagues and in presentations to business owners. I couldn't say enough good things about my builder and what he had created for us.

If he had simply done those things, but didn't educate us about quality workmanship, small hidden details and his creativity, would we have raved about it? Of course not. He had effectively made the invisible visible and, as a result, I became a vocal advocate of his business and the best kind of client you can have.

No-one raves about ordinary and the untrained eye can't always appreciate what goes into a project, so it's up to you to point it out. By doing this on every project you complete, you'll build an army of unpaid salespeople who continue to sing your praises to everyone they encounter. It's a simple way to build value into what may otherwise be missed and to avoid being seen as a builder of 'ordinary'.

Builders Little Black Book
www.blbb.com.au

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Coming Events

June

What: 2018 ARV Awards
When: 15 June
Where: Docklands, Melbourne
Website: www.aquaticsandrecreation.org.au/events/10995

August

What: SPLASH! Pool & Spa Trade Show
When: 1-2 August
Where: Gold Coast Convention & Exhibition Centre
Website: www.splashexpo.com.au

October

What: World Aquatic Health Conference
When: 10-12 October
Where: Charleston, South Carolina, USA
Website: www.theWHC.org

What: Interbad 2018
When: 23-26 October
Where: Stuttgart, Germany
Website: www.interbad.de

What: 2018 International Pool | Spa | Patio (PSP) Expo
When: 31 October-2 November
Where: Las Vegas, USA
Website: www.poolspapatio.com

November

What: Piscine Global Europe 2018
When: 13-16 November
Where: Lyon, France
Website: www.piscine-expo.com

December

What: Canadian Pool & Spa Conference & Expo
When: 03-06 December 2018
Where: Scotiabank Convention Centre, Niagara Falls Ontario Canada
Website: www.poolandspaexpo.ca

2019

What: The Pool & Spa Show
When: 29-31 January 2019
Where: Details TBA
Website: www.thepoolspashow.com

What: 8th International Swimming Pool & Spa Conference
When: 18-22 March 2019
Where: Marseille, France
Website: 8thswimpoolspa.sciencesconf.org

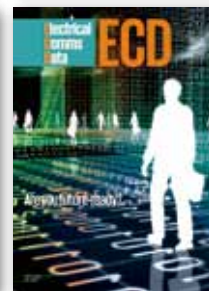
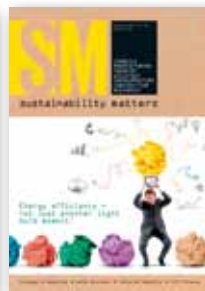
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You can now easily control your pool's water balance with Bluetooth® and the free downloadable **AstralPool ChlorinatorGO** app on your smart device.



Find out more about the Viron eQ at
astralpool.com.au/eQ

