

CYANURIC ACID WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

WARNING: The cyanuric acid level in your pool may now be in excess of, or approaching, the State Health Code maximum of 100 ppm. If it is found to be greater than 100 ppm, you will be required to lower the level. **THE ONLY ACCEPTABLE MEANS OF LOWERING CYANURIC ACID LEVELS IS BY DRAINING WATER FROM THE POOL AND REPLENISHING WITH SUFFICIENT FRESH WATER TO LOWER THE PARTS PER MILLION OF CYANURIC ACID IN THE POOL.**

WHAT IS CYANURIC ACID?

Cyanuric acid (CYA), commonly known as chlorine “stabilizer” or pool “conditioner” is a substance used in pools to reduce the loss of chlorine to sunlight. Ultraviolet rays “drive” chlorine from the pool (agitation from swimmers speeds this up even more), making it difficult in some situations (for example in a high-use, outdoor pool or spa) to maintain a proper free chlorine residual. Cyanuric acid bonds with chlorine to slow its loss to the atmosphere.

Cyanuric acid is not the same as muriatic acid, which is used in pH control.

WHERE DOES CYANURIC ACID COME FROM?

CYA finds its way into a pool either through granular or tablet chlorine containing “dichloro- or trichloro-isocyanurate”, or by direct introduction into the pool as cyanuric acid. It’s for this reason that tablet-using chlorine canisters (erosion feeders) are **discouraged** on most pools. Some counties in short supply of fresh water prohibit them outright.

WHAT SHOULD THE CYANURIC ACID (ISOCYANURATE) LEVEL BE?

If it’s used, keep it below 100 ppm. Although opinions vary, many industry experts believe that maximum benefit is obtained at levels of 20-50 ppm. **More is not better:** at levels over 50-ppm chlorine begins to lose its effectiveness. At 100 ppm it makes it impossible to maintain real disinfection in the pool.

WHAT LEVEL OF FREE CHLORINE RESIDUAL IS REQUIRED WHEN USING CYA?

No less than 1.5 ppm. Addition of stabilizer (CYA) slows the rate of bacteriological “kill” of free chlorine, so higher minimum chlorine residuals are required when isocyanurates are used.

HOW IS CYA TESTED FOR?

Test kits are available through most pool supply stores. State law requires that it be tested every 30 days and the level recorded on the operating records.