

TWO-STAGE PLAN OF THE EUROPEAN WATERPARK ASSOCIATION E.V. FOR THE REOPENING OF WATERPARKS AND SPAS

Preamble

The European Waterpark Association is an association of waterparks and spas in Europe. With several hundred thousand people directly and indirectly employed, public spas in the countries of the European Union play an important role in public health, exercise and family leisure. The **European Waterpark Association's waterparks and spas** welcome and support the activities of the European governments and authorities in combating COVID-19 infections and limiting the spread of the Coronavirus in Europe.

The health and safety of our guests and employees is our top priority.

According to unanimous expert opinion, demonstrated through a report by the German Federal Environment Agency from 12th March 2020, a visit to a public spa with conventional treatment of its pool water does not pose an increased risk of infection for people: "A disinfectant (usually chlorine) is added to the pool water, which inactivates or kills any potential pathogens in the pool water. Enveloped coronaviruses are particularly easy to inactivate". Nevertheless, even in waterparks and spas, from our perspective, increased hygiene measures and guidelines for the behaviour of guests and employees are still essential for effectively contributing to the collective fight against the Coronavirus.

Our spas have always been **important places for health, exercise** and, above all, for a functioning **community life**. The last point is particularly important for the **gradual return to normality: many families will not be able to afford a holiday this year for economic reasons** – and even if they can afford it, it is still completely uncertain when unrestricted (international) travel will be possible. A joint visit to a waterpark or spa offers an alternative that's close to home.

We, therefore, call for **standardised regulations for the reopening** of waterparks and spas to be put in place and made available to people **as soon as possible**. To realise this, we have drawn up the following **two-stage reopening plan**, which we are recommending that governments and authorities carry out.

The two-stage plan will take effect once there is a relaxation of the existing lockdown and social distancing rules due to falling cases of the virus.

Stage 1: Reopening of waterparks and spas with reduced visitor numbers

In stage 1, the number of bathers who are permitted in a waterpark or spa at one time is limited. The ideal parameter for the limitation is the number of available lockers, as this is already adapted to the size and maximum capacity (simultaneity factor) of the spas, and it is a very good way to manage the restriction. We, therefore, recommend the following:

- Outside the entrances, the checkout area and in front of the shops, distance markings must be affixed at intervals of 1.5 metres.
- A maximum of 2/3 of the existing lockers may be occupied (only one guest at a time). Counting is carried out using the cash register system or by the limited number of issued keys.
- In collective changing rooms, which do not have separate compartments, every second locker must remain closed.
- In sauna cabins, a minimum distance of 1.5 metres between the individual seats is required – this must be marked accordingly.
- There shall be no infusions with swirls in the sauna cabins. Steam pools will remain closed during the first phase of reopening.
- A distance of 1.5 metres between the individual loungers must be adhered to, the number of loungers will be reduced, if necessary.
- In restaurants, a distance of 1.5 metres between the individual tables must be maintained in the dining area. 2 people maximum are permitted to sit together at the tables (except for families).
- In the self-service area of restaurants, only packaged drinks and food may be taken by the guests, open food and drinks must be issued by the staff. Pool bars are still allowed to serve drinks to-go but cannot designate seating or standing areas as lounge areas.
- In front of the slides, diving towers and other attractions with waiting times, distance markings with 1.5 metres will be placed on the ground.
- The cashiers will be protected by cough screens.
- Cleaning and hygiene plans must be adapted to the increased requirements of virus prevention by increasing hygiene and cleaning measures and shortening the intervals between cleaning.
- Water aerobics and other courses are only permitted if a minimum distance of 1.5 metres can be guaranteed between individuals. In the case of children's swimming courses, the accompanying guardians should assist the instructors in complying with this rule.
- General massages and physiotherapy treatments may only be offered if this is again permitted in general physiotherapy practices. Therapeutic services may continue to run if prescribed by a doctor for medically urgent reasons (Infection Protection Act of 20/03/2020, paragraph 5 b). Treatment beds, used equipment, etc. must be disinfected after each treatment, and sheets, towels, etc. replaced.
- Spa guests must be advised on notices about the increased requirements for virus prevention. Soap dispensers must be attached to sinks (if not already available) and refilled regularly.

Stage 2: Reopening of waterparks and spas in normal operation

- The simultaneity factor (the number of bathers present at the same time) is determined by the number of available lockers. It is not permitted to admit more guests than the number of lockers available.
- This regulation and all rules on keeping distance and hygiene measures shall remain in place until the responsible authorities revoke the mandatory distance regulations and the hygiene rules regarding social distancing and lockdowns or downgrade them to 'advisory' provisions.

Contact:

European Waterpark Association e.V.
Dr. Klaus Batz (Managing Director)
Josephsplatz 4
D-90403 Nuremberg

batz@ewa.info
+49-911-24 06 145
+49-172-74 72 594