



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Avoid seething broths of bacteria and parasites**

The Environmental Health Association (Australia) Inc, (EHA) is highlighting the dangers of relaxing in poorly maintained private swimming pools and spa baths this summer.

“The combination of poor quality water and additional heat from a pool blanket can turn an apparently clean looking back yard pool into a seething broth of bacteria and parasites,” said EHA Vice President – Peter McKenzie.

Pool covers reduce water evaporation but, solar blankets will also artificially heat the water above the safe temperature of 26 degrees Celsius. This can lead to the rapid growth of harmful amoeba and bacteria.

“Amoebic meningitis is fatal in up to 40 per cent of infections in children, *Pseudomonas Aeruginosa* can result in swimmers ear and also causes bather’s rash,” he explains.

Before cooling off check that the water is being treated correctly by the owner – for the safety of you and your family recommends Mr McKenzie.

“Any pool or spa without an automatic chlorinator (chlorine) or brominator (bromine) or salt cell system is a risk to those going into that water”.

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, fever and headaches can be early symptoms of infection due to water borne diseases. Those with concerns should seek urgent medical attention.

“Homeowners worried about their pool water should also contact an Environmental Health Officer (EHO)” advises Mr McKenzie.

EHOs are specially trained in water chemistry and microbiology. They are responsible for taking water samples from all WA’s public, commercial, tourists, educational and larger body corporate swimming pools and spas each month.

“Remember, no one is responsible for looking after private swimming and spa pools except the owners.”

Contact your local pool shop for information on the use of water test kits, then take appropriate action when results indicate chemical levels are high or low – *never* add chemicals while people are still in the water.

“If in doubt ring your local government EHO for advice,” said Mr McKenzie.

**To arrange an interview/photograph with Peter McKenzie, please contact Mary Ward – EHA Media Officer on 041681 3223 or email: [media@envirohealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:media@envirohealthaustralia.com.au)**  
**For further information see:**

[http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/887/2/aquatic\\_facilities\\_forms\\_factsheets\\_and\\_checklists.pm](http://www.public.health.wa.gov.au/3/887/2/aquatic_facilities_forms_factsheets_and_checklists.pm)

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Environmental Health  
Association (Australia) Inc.  
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## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Environmental Health Association (Australia) Inc (EHAA) is a peak professional body seeking to promote excellence in environmental health practice through education, training and professional development at a local, national and international level.

The overlap between care of the environment and the practice of public health is broadly described as environmental health. Members are passionately committed to the delivery of best practice standards to the public and industry.

As a federated, autonomous incorporated organisation, all decision making is undertaken at State Level. Ten special interest groups (SIG) inform members on important issues and seek comment in the development of policy positions.

EHAA SIGs include: Built Environment, Professional Management, Food Safety, Emergency Management, Waste Management, Climate Change, Indigenous Health, Safety & Health, Public Health and Sustainability.

For more information about the Environmental Health Association (Australia) Inc please contact President Llew Withers via email [info@envirohealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:info@envirohealthaustralia.com.au) or EHAA Media Officer Mary Ward on 0416 813 223 or email: [media@envirohealthaustralia.com.au](mailto:media@envirohealthaustralia.com.au)