



**Nelsonite**  
POOL AND DECK COATING

## INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN # 100

### MAINTENANCE OF A COATED POOL

All swimming pools require a program of regular maintenance. The chemical parameters listed below are those offered by the largest chemical manufacturers serving the pool and spa industry. Most pool chemical manufacturers state that certain parameters of pool water chemistry - such as Total Alkalinity and Calcium Hardness - should be different for painted pools (and fiberglass pools) in comparison to pools with a plaster finish. All of the following guidelines are within the standards published by the National Spa and Pool Institute.

The following program of maintenance will extend the service life of your coating:

- (1) Periodic brushing of the sides of the pool, preferably once weekly during the swimming season.
- (2) A pH in the range of 7.2 - 7.8. Many pool operators believe that a pH at the higher level of the range works best for painted pools.
- (3) A Total Alkalinity in the range of 125 - 150 ppm.
- (4) A Calcium Hardness in the range of 175 - 225 ppm.

Follow the directions in the pamphlet for pool water care provided by most pool chemical companies. Use your test kit.

#### IS IT SCALE OR CHALK?

Sometimes pool owners will complain that the paint is "chalking" and that "white stuff" gets on the swimmers when they use the pool. The situation is readily apparent when a person rubs their hand on the pool wall and a white cloud forms in the water.

However, repeated tests of the cloudy water reveal nothing in the water that is in the paint. In 99 out of 100 cases, it is not the paint that is chalking or oxidizing. The problem is usually one of water chemistry.

Typically, what has happened is that the Total Alkalinity (TA) of the pool has dropped too low. When this occurs, some of the minerals in the water come out of solution. The most common minerals to precipitate out of solution form calcium carbonate. It is this element which forms "scale," a problem which occurs in all swimming pools, painted or unpainted. These particles collect on the sides and bottom of the pool. They are like a fine dust, most often white, and have a greasy or oily feel. On a bare plaster pool the surface is porous and these particles attach to the plaster resulting in a stained, discolored pool. All pool water chemical pamphlets talk about scaling and how to prevent it.

Please refer to label for cautions and warnings pertaining to this product.

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With low Total Alkalinity and high Calcium Hardness levels, the pool water becomes “saturated.” When the water becomes saturated, minerals fall out of solution. Think of a glass of iced tea. Put in a spoonful of sugar, stir it up and the sugar dissolves. Now, put in five spoonfuls of sugar and stir. No matter how long you stir, some of the sugar does not dissolve. As soon as one molecule of sugar dissolves, another molecule “falls out” of solution. The tea has become saturated. The same thing can happen in a swimming pool.

To overcome the problem of cloudy water in a pool, perform the following steps:

- (1) Adjust the Total Alkalinity and the Calcium Hardness to the recommended levels.
- (2) Add a sequestering agent or chelating agent recommended by your pool dealer. These agents are commonly called stain and scale control agents and there are a number of them on the market. Follow label directions.
- (3) Add a “clarifier” or “flocculent” to the water. Again, follow your dealer’s recommendation. This product will bind together the small particles of debris that would normally pass through the filter system.
- (4) Turn on the filtering system so that it will operate 16 - 20 hours per day. Do this for 5 days.
- (5) Brush the sides of the pool daily for 5 days.

Typically, this procedure will clean the pool of the accumulated scale. It may take up to 5 days for the water to become clear.

If this procedure does not work, drain the water from the pool and scrub the surface with a solution of pool acids and water in a 1:2 mixture (one part pool acids and two parts water). Rinse thoroughly with a hose with a jet nozzle. This will remove all scale from the surface.