

**Columbus Consolidated Government  
Council Meeting Agenda Item**

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| <b>TO:</b>             | Mayor and Councilors  |
| <b>AGENDA SUBJECT:</b> | <b>Inclement Weather Policy for Pools</b>   |
| <b>AGENDA SUMMARY:</b> | Approval is requested to accept the attached policy as the applicable policy for all public pools operated by the City. |
| <b>INITIATED BY:</b>   | <b>Parks and Recreation Department</b>  |

**Recommendation:** Approval is requested to accept the attached policy as the applicable policy for all public pools operated by the City.

**Background:** The Georgia Department of Public Health regulations mandate that operators of public pools establish and adopt an inclement weather policy for the safety of bathers of said public pools.

**Analysis:** The Department of Parks and Recreation manages the City owned pools and has created the attached inclement weather policy through the application of established best practices in force in other jurisdictions. The department would also be responsible for enforcing the policy as needed.

**Financial Considerations:** There would be no financial considerations associated with the policy or its adoption..

**Legal Considerations:** Council is the approving authority for the adoption of all policies.

**Recommendation/Actions:** Council should review and discuss the policy then grant approval to adopt it as the applicable inclement weather policy for public pools.

**A RESOLUTION**

**NO. \_\_\_\_\_**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT’S INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY FOR CITY POOLS.**

**WHEREAS**, the regulations of the Georgia Department of Public Health require that Management shall establish an inclement weather policy for the safety of the bathers; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Columbus Consolidated Government’s Department of Parks and Recreation manages several outdoor pools as well as the indoor pool at the Columbus Aquatic Center; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Director of the Parks and Recreation Department, in consultation with other Departments and the pool users, has prepared the attached updated version of its inclement weather policy which complies with all state requirements.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF COLUMBUS, GEORGIA HEREBY RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

This Council, having reviewed and discussed the attached policy, hereby approves its adoption as the applicable policy for all public pools operated by the City.

Introduced at a regular meeting of the Council of Columbus, Georgia held on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 2024 and adopted at said meeting by the affirmative vote of \_\_\_\_\_ members of said Council.

|                           |        |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Councilor Allen voting    | _____. |
| Councilor Chambers voting | _____. |
| Councilor Cogle voting    | _____. |
| Councilor Crabb voting    | _____. |
| Councilor Davis voting    | _____. |
| Councilor Garrett voting  | _____. |
| Councilor Hickey voting   | _____. |
| Councilor Huff voting     | _____. |
| Councilor Thomas voting   | _____. |
| Councilor Tucker voting   | _____. |

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sandra T. Davis, Clerk of Council

\_\_\_\_\_  
B.H. “Skip” Henderson III, Mayor



*Quality People Providing Quality Service*

**Columbus, Georgia**  
*Georgia's First Consolidated Government*  
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Columbus, Georgia 31901



DEPARTMENT OF  
PARKS and RECREATION

Administrative Office  
Phone 706-225-4658

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

At the Columbus Aquatic Center, the safety of members, program participants, and staff is our highest priority. After careful review and consideration of national statistics showing no injuries and/or deaths associated with the use of indoor swimming pools during thunderstorms where lightning is present in the area, we're updating our policy below. For outdoor pools, however, swimming during a thunderstorm is extremely dangerous. Lightning regularly strikes water, and since water conducts electricity, a nearby lightning strike is extremely probable.

## **INDOOR POOLS**

The indoor pools and pool decks at the Columbus Aquatic Center will close when lightning or thunder is detected within 6 miles of the Columbus Aquatic Center unless the facility is closed to the general public and under the supervision of an entity sponsoring a special event and the conditions in the following paragraph are met.

During the use by any entity for any swim event where anyone other than a department or agency of the Columbus, Georgia Consolidated Government is hosting at the Columbus Aquatic Center, that organization (the Host) will be responsible for providing a copy of its own inclement weather policy which will be used during the event and will be responsible for the enforcement of that policy. The Host will also be responsible for providing a release which holds the Columbus Consolidated Government, as well as all of its administrators, directors, agents, officers, members, volunteers, and employees harmless for any liability claim arising out of the event, and the Host will provide a certificate of liability insurance in an amount satisfactory to the City's Finance Director with the Columbus Consolidated Government named as an additional insured for the event. If a copy of the applicable policy and the required certificate of insurance are not provided by the Host, the Columbus Aquatic Center will follow its policy of closing when lightning or thunder is detected within 6 miles of the Columbus Aquatic Center.

Indoor pools will close immediately when a tornado warning has been issued in the area. All users and staff will receive instructions for the safest location inside the facility while the area is under a tornado warning. Once the warning has been lifted, all swimming pools will reopen. During a high wind advisory, participants, spectators, and staff may be asked to move to a safe location until the advisory is lifted.

## **OUTDOOR POOLS**

**Lightning and Thunder:** When thunder/lightning is first noticed/detected a minimum of 6 miles or less from any outdoor pool facility, outdoor pool activities will be suspended, and the outdoor pool and pool deck will be evacuated until 30 minutes after the last sign of thunder or lightning. The distance from a facility to an approaching thunderstorm can be five to eight miles away, but lightning can strike from a much farther distance.

**Rain/Wind:** Heavy rain can make it difficult to see the bottom of a pool or beneath the surface. If heavy rain causes bottom obstruction, pools will be cleared, and swimming halted until the rain lets up. Wind can also cause safety hazards. If the wind is observably strong or gusty and causes bottom obstruction due to rippling, swimmers will be cleared from pools until the bottom is visible.