

## Inground Winter Closedown Guide

To clarify the procedure for winterising your pool, please first see your manufacturers manual which relates to your specific pool, this guide is aimed to fill in any grey areas which you may have before you commence your pools winterising.

### Step 1: Water Balance

During the winter months, it is important to maintain pH levels at 7.4-7.6. This is slightly higher than the normal acceptable pH range of 7.2-7.6 because water becomes more acidic in pH as the temperature drops and, of course, there is acid rain! If you have not checked the total alkalinity of the water for some time, we would strongly recommend that you test them before winter shut down.

### Step 2: Clean your Sand filter

Your filter media (usually sand) will have collected oil, grease and other debris during the swimming season, all of which will impair its performance. Your winterisation programme should include a thorough cleaning of the filter and filter media using a deep cleanse system with a filter cleaner to break down the deposits and restore peak efficiency, this deep clean will allow your sand to over winter in a clean state, fresh for the spring.

? **Tip!** – You should try and ensure you change the sand every 3 seasons, and if the pool gets very high use, you may have to change the sand every other year! – Good sand will save you time and money; remember that if you have had to use clarifiers to increase water clarity throughout the season, it could mean that your sand is past its best.

### Step 3: Partially drain the pool or not?

All pools are constructed differently most Inground pools should be drained by at least 18", assuming that local ground water table permits, and that the pool structure will not come under any undue pressure from any pool surround. It is always prudent to consult the company which built your pool if known, as they should be able to advise you in this matter. Please ensure you do not pump your pool water into the drains, as a high chlorine level will be classed as an environmental hazard, and this can have serious legal implications. You can drain your pool in many ways, firstly if you do not have a low suction or main drain, you can vacuum your pool with the manual vacuum cleaner, but instead of your sand filters multiport valve being in the filter position, turn your pump off, and rotate the valve handle into the Waste position, if your valve does not have a waste position, you can simply use the backwash position. Turn on your pump, and you will now be removing the water & debris from your pool via the vacuum head in the bottom of your pool, in theory this method would allow you to almost completely empty your pool, but for the winter months, we

only recommend you drop the level by around 18 Inches (50cm approx). Once you have removed the necessary amount of water, you can then quickly turn your pump off, rotate the multiport handle back round to filter, and then move on to adding the winter chemicals to the remaining water which will still be circulating for the next day or so. Another method is slightly easier, if you do not have a low suction or main drain use a submersible pump to drop the pool level once you have cleaned the pool in the normal way, and when you have finished dropping the water level, you can then turn your submersible off, replace the hose to your submersible with a short 2 or 3 meter length, and let this hose stay within the pool. When you turn the submersible pump back on, it will have the effect of snaking around the pool giving you a good dispersal of chemical. This can be left to run for a couple of hours. If you have a low suction or main drain, follow the instructions on vacuuming your pool to waste, but once the level has dropped below the skimmer, remove the vacuum if you have finished cleaning, and simply close the skimmer valve, and continue pumping your pool out to the appropriate level via the low suction or main drain.

? **Tip!** - You must ensure that the vacuum hose is connected to the hole in the bottom of your skimmer as tightly as possible to reduce any air getting in, we would normally recommend using a threaded hosetail, which can be P.T.F.E taped into the thread and this will then give you a good seal on the vacuum hose going into the pool.

? **Tip!** - The water returning into the pool may spray out of the inlet fitting, so if this is a problem, simply remove the eyeball part of the inlet if possible to reduce the spray, or partially fit the winter cover to direct the water back down into the pool.

#### Step 4: Shock Dose

Before treating your pool with one of our winterising products, shock dose the water to a level of 5 - 10 mg/l (ppm) using either Multifunction Shock Chlorine granules, or a shock pot. A dose of 450g in 12,500 gallons will increase the chlorine level by approximately 5mg/l (ppm). After application of the shock treatment, run your pump for 6 - 8 hours to ensure good distribution of the chlorine.

? **Tip!** - By running the pump you are ensuring the shock chlorine is well dissolved and distributed throughout the water so reduce any chance of damaging or pre-aging your pool lining, and sterilising your sand filter & pipework at the same time.

### **Step 5: Add winterising product to protect pool from algae growth**

Add your winteriser directly to the pool water around the edges with the pump and filter in operation. After dosing the pool, allow the pump to run for another 6 – 8 hours to aid even distribution of the product.

? **Tip!** – Now that you have drained & dosed your pool, you can use the winter floaters to protect the pool from possible ice damage, and the Gizmo is a great skimmer anti-freezing device.

### **Step 6: Prepare your pool equipment for winter**

If you don't have a frost stat fitted, you should drain the water from the pump, filter, heater and any ancillary equipment, if your pool equipment isn't drained down, then frost damage will occur.

? **Tip!** – We always put all gaskets and O rings that are removed from the pump & filter into the Pump basket and then replace the lid, this way all the bits are safe, secure & dry and you know exactly where all the bits are for next spring!

? **Tip!** – Gas boilers can sometimes have badly corroded drain plug sockets, if this is the case, once you have removed all the water from the heater, re-insert the drain plug, this will reduce the corrosion on the thread, and at least next spring you don't have to hunt around for the drain plug.

### **Step 7: Cover the pool**

A well-designed cover will keep your pool relatively free of leaves and debris. If you decide not to cover your pool, you will need to give your pool an additional shock dose about mid-winter and ensure you remove any fallen debris from the pool, especially leaves which can cause very bad leaf staining as they rot.

? **Tip!** – If you get a lot of debris blowing under your winter debris cover, try putting a row of bricks all around the outside edge of the cover, this will stop most leaves blowing under.

N.B. This information is given without warranty or engagement and is intended as a guideline only. If you prefer not to winterise your own pool, then please talk to your local professional pool shop.