Your Pool's Support System

The support equipment circulates filters and heats the water in your pool. It also helps to evenly distribute the chemicals you add to control purity and balance.

The Filter

The filter's job is to keep your pool's water fresh and clean. There are three basic types of filters; all designed to remove oils, grease and dirt from pool water. Dangerous pressures can build up inside a filter and before you attempt any maintenance operation, be sure to consult a professional or the equipment operations manual.

The Heater

Most pool owners who have heaters agree that it is a vital factor in expanding their pool's use. Heaters can extend your swimming opportunities for more hours in the day and more months of the year, even year-round.

Pool water of 78^{o}F is what most people prefer for swimming. The San Diego sun alone can help water achieve that temperature during the summer. Your pool will never exceed the average air temperature. Therefore, the assistance of a heater might be needed to keep water constantly at 78oF in most climate zones.

The Surface Skimmer

One or more skimmers are included in properly designed pools. Skimmers draw in surface water accompanied by any floating dirt, leaves, oil or other debris while pool drains remove objects suspended in the main body of water or that fall to the bottom of the pool. Connected to the filtration system, skimmers help to keep the water's surface clean and minimize the amount of debris that gets into the main body of the pool water.

Most skimmers are built right into the side of the pool, but portables are available. Portable skimmers hang on the edge of the pool and are used for above- or in-ground pools that were initially built without skimming systems. The skimmer is most effective if located on the down-wind side. The wind will help push in more water and it will also blow most leaves in that direction.

The Chemicals

By adding chlorine or bromine to your pool water, you can protect yourself against germs and algae that might form on the pool's surface or in the water itself. Chemicals disinfect the water and also keep it sparkling clean.

Balancing pH in Pool Water

The ideal pH level for pool water is between 7.2 and 7.6. Above 7.6, the water is more alkaline (base) and under certain conditions can form deposits in the piping and on pool surfaces.

Below 7.2 pH, the pool water is more acidic; the lower on the scale, the greater the acidity. If the water is too acidic, it can damage the piping and pool surfaces under certain conditions.

Maintaining your water slightly on the alkaline side (between 7.2 and 7.6) helps chemicals do a proper disinfecting job, keeps scale from forming on the pool and support equipment and retards any corrosion.

Adding the Right Chemicals

The pH of your pool tells you which chemicals to add to maintain a 7.2 to 7.6 pH level. Soda ash or sodium carbonate and sodium bicarbonate are common chemicals used to raise pH. Muriatic acid or sodium bisulfate lower pool water pH and make it more acidic. Liquid, powder or tablet forms of the chemicals are most often used in residential pools.