

**DON R. SCOTT, M.D.**  
A MEDICAL CORPORATION1100 N. PALM CANYON DR., SUITE 108  
PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262

Dear Sir or Madam,

If you are reading this, then you are probably involved in making beneficial decisions for your homeowners or tenants. In fact, this is being brought most likely to your attention by one of my patients. I recommend to most of my patients to get involved in hydrotherapy or water exercise. The enclosed articles speak for themselves. I almost insist on the use of salt water (saline) swimming pools as free chlorine is irritating and relatively toxic. It is only a matter of time that residential chlorine pools will be phased out of existence.

What I am getting at is that one or more pools should be converted to saline and the cost is roughly \$1,500.00. Since chlorine will no longer be purchased and salt is very cheap, it could pay for itself in several years. More importantly, water exercise classes can be started. Now we can start using all those unoccupied pools. The benefits will be enormous: improved health, weight loss, camaraderie. The benefits of association such as group exercise can not be over emphasized. Wouldn't it be wonderful to actually get to know your neighbors?

I can't think of any reason why this shouldn't be done. The cost is irrelevant. Do you know how much it costs for one day in the hospital or chronic medical care for diseases that can be helped or prevented with hydrotherapy? We just need to get over inertia and start the process. I guarantee it will be the best thing you may ever be involved with.

Sincerely Yours,

Donald R. Scott, M.D.  
DRS/amc

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A MEDICAL CORPORATION

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PALM SPRINGS, CA 92262

To Whom It May Concern:

This patient has chronic disease and needs hydrotherapy. I advocate pool exercises to treat and to prevent disease. See attached articles. Medicare (enclosed) has approved diagnostic testing but not truly prevention services. I prefer salt water pools for water exercise, as chlorine is a toxic chemical unless balanced with sodium. If indeed patients swam in salt water pools daily (at least one hour) then their health in all ways would increase. This would significantly decrease Medicare expenses.

Sincerely,

Donald R. Scott, M.D.  
DRS/amc

# Section 5: Medicare Program Basics

## Preventive Services to Help You Stay Healthy

### Medicare Part B Covered Preventive Services

### Who is Covered

#### Bone Mass Measurements:

Once every 24 months for qualified individuals and more frequently if medically necessary.

Discuss with your doctor to see if you qualify.

#### NEW—Cardiovascular Screening

**Blood Tests:** Talk to your doctor about how often you can get these screening tests. Starting January 1, 2005, includes blood tests to check cholesterol, lipid or triglyceride levels, and other tests for early detection of, or to identify a high risk for developing, cardiovascular disease. How frequently these tests are covered had not been decided at the time this handbook was printed.

Discuss with your doctor to see if you qualify.

#### Colorectal Cancer Screening:

**Fecal Occult Blood Test (FOBT)**—Once every 12 months.

All people with Medicare age 50 and older.  
**Note:** There is no minimum age for having a colonoscopy.

**Flexible Sigmoidoscopy**—Once every 48 months.

**Colonoscopy**—Once every 24 months if you are at high risk for colorectal cancer. If you aren't at high risk for colorectal cancer, once every 10 years, but not within 48 months of a screening flexible sigmoidoscopy.

**Barium Enema**—Doctor can use this instead of a flexible sigmoidoscopy or colonoscopy. It's covered every 24 months if you are at high risk for colorectal cancer and every 48 months if you aren't at high risk.

### Preventive Services to Help You Stay Healthy (continued)

#### Medicare Part B Covered Preventive Services

#### Who is Covered

##### NEW—Diabetes Services:

**Diabetes Screening Tests**—Talk to your doctor about how often you can get these screening tests. Includes fasting plasma glucose test. How frequently these tests are covered had not been decided at the time this handbook was printed.

Certain people with Medicare who are at risk for diabetes, starting January 1, 2005.

**Diabetes Self-Management Training**

Certain people with Medicare who are at risk for complications from diabetes. Your doctor or other health care provider must request this service.

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##### **Glaucoma Testing:**

Once every 12 months. Must be done or supervised by an eye doctor who is legally allowed to do this service in your state.

People with Medicare who are in one of the following groups at high risk for glaucoma: people with diabetes, a family history of glaucoma, or African Americans age 50 and older.

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##### **Pap Test and Pelvic Examination (Includes a clinical breast exam):**

Once every 24 months. Once every 12 months if you are at high risk for cervical or vaginal cancer, or if you are of childbearing age and have had an abnormal Pap test in the past 36 months.

All women with Medicare.



## Section 5: Medicare Program Basics

Preventive Services to Help You Stay Healthy (continued)

### Medicare Part B Covered Preventive Services

#### Prostate Cancer Screening:

Digital Rectal Examination—Once every 12 months.

Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) Test—Once every 12 months.

#### Screening Mammograms:

Once every 12 months.

Medicare also covers digital technologies for mammogram screening.

#### Shots (vaccinations):

Flu Shot\*—Once a flu season in the fall or winter.

Pneumococcal Shot—One shot may be all you ever need. Ask your doctor.

Hepatitis B Shots

### Who is Covered

All men with Medicare age 50 and older (coverage begins the day after your 50th birthday).

All women with Medicare age 40 and older. You can also get one baseline mammogram between ages 35 and 39.

All people with Medicare.

All people with Medicare.

Certain people with Medicare at medium to high risk for Hepatitis B.

### NEW—"Welcome to Medicare"

#### Physical Examination:

One time only, within the first six months you have Part B. Includes measurement of height, weight and blood pressure, an EKG, education, and counseling.

People whose Part B coverage begins on or after January 1, 2005.

**\* Why should I get a flu shot every year?** The flu is a serious illness that can lead to pneumonia. It can be dangerous for people age 65 and older and people of any age with certain chronic medical conditions. You need a flu shot each year because flu viruses are always changing. The shot is updated each year for the most current flu viruses. Also, the flu shot only helps protect you from the flu for about one year. There is a chance that you may still get the flu, but your symptoms will be less severe.

## How Popular Is Aquatic Therapy? Is It A Good Idea?

In the Inland Northwest, the popularity of aquatic physical therapy care has drastically increased over the past year! Many are experiencing the overwhelming benefits of this treatment option. Medical providers have increased their awareness and utilization of physical therapy in the pool and have seen its significant benefits to their patients.

Why all the interest in aquatic physical therapy? Sometimes physical therapy sounds like a painful option for patients, or sometimes there are certain restrictions that inhibit a patient from starting physical therapy on land. Aquatic therapy gives patients the option to begin treatment sooner, in an environment that alleviates some of the limitations of land based therapy, like gravity. It is the perfect environment to begin a low impact stretching and exercise program to begin recovery.

The unique properties of the water, including buoyancy, support the body as it is working to increase mobility, range of motion, and strength. "I love the pool. It is a great pain reliever. While I am in the pool moving, it is very therapeutic. Also, it helps psychologically, being free, even for a short time, from pain with movement. I will recommend it to everyone!" – Local community resident who recently completed treatment from Pinnacle Physical Therapy's aquatic therapy program.

Who can benefit from aquatic therapy? People who experience any neck or back pain, any joint pain in the shoulders, hips, knees, or ankles, pregnant women experiencing low back, sciatic or hip pain, or patients recovering from any orthopedic surgery.

Pinnacle Physical Therapy & Sports Medicine is proud to have assisted in the growing success of aquatic therapy in the Inland Northwest. Pinnacle's aquatic therapy program has immediate availability so call (208) 777-4242 for more information and learn what the buzz for aquatic therapy is all about!

# Get everybody into the pool

by Andrea Renee Wyatt, M.S.S., C.S.C.S

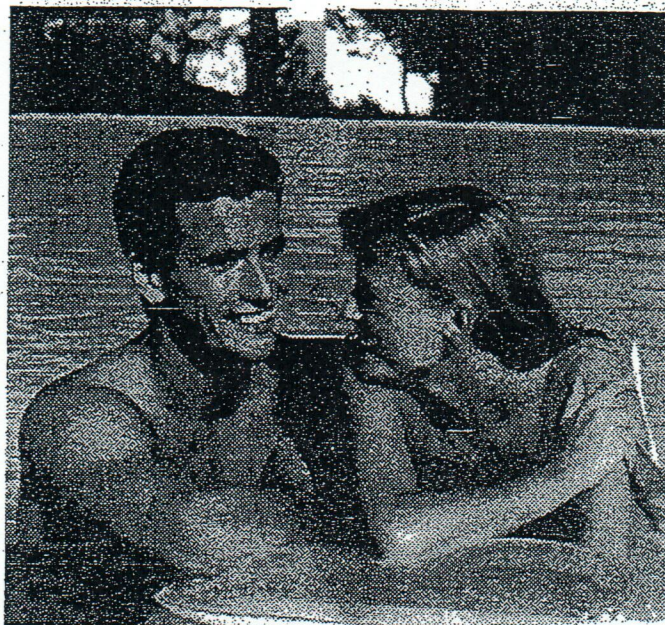
Putting some variety into exercise is one of the best ways to avoid getting trapped in a fitness slump. The summer months are a good time to try something new.

If you have a pool or access to one, a fun and beneficial workout can be gained from water or aquatic exercise. Aquatic exercise can increase cardiovascular endurance as well as improve strength and flexibility. You will also see results in improved circulation and weight control. And it's a great non-impact form of exercise if you're trying to prevent or rehabilitate injuries.

When you're in the water, there's almost no gravity; the body is buoyant and relieved of approximately 90 percent of its weight. This allows you to easily float. And with 12 percent to 14 percent more resistance than you would be moving through the air, the water makes your body work through every movement and in almost every direction.

Here are a few aquatic exercises to consider:

- Swimming laps can be a great source of cardiovascular exercise. Continuous lap swimming for 30 minutes can burn calories, and by increasing the intensity of each lap, you can increase muscle endurance and strength.
- Water walking or jogging is great for a person who cannot swim or is not a strong swimmer. Walking or jogging in the shallow end of the pool can provide great resistance for your muscles, improving muscular and cardiovascular endurance. Increase your intensity by jogging with your knees high and with a strong arm swing.
- Head for the deep end of the pool with an aqua belt, which allows you to float with-



sors and large, full-body movements are not only fun but a great challenging workout.

- Take a water fitness class, which provides a great source of motivation, fun and sweat. (P.S. It's not just for seniors!)

**One note of caution:** Be sure to drink plenty of water before and after exercising in the water. Being in the water may prevent you from knowing that you've been sweating.

Water exercise might be just the change you've needed to offer you new challenges and incentives to exercise. Plus, during the sizzling summer months it's a great way to get fit while keeping cool. So jump in!

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If you have a fitness or training question, e-mail Andrea at [letters.kfws@hearstsc.com](mailto:letters.kfws@hearstsc.com), or write her in care of King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475. Always consult a physician before starting an exercise program.

## *Exercise Away Depression*

Walking on the treadmill or riding a stationary bike for half an hour several times a week may be as beneficial in treating mild to moderated depression as taking antidepressant medication or receiving cognitive-behavioral therapy.

Researches in Texas found that of 80 adults, those who got at least 30 minutes of moderately intense aerobic exercise three to five times a week had roughly a 50 percent decline in depressive symptoms after three months. Those who did lower-intensity aerobic workouts or stretching for similar amounts of time had a 30 percent reduction. This is the first study to show that exercise alone produces comparable effects to psychotherapy or medications for milder forms of depression. (*American Journal of Preventive Medicine, January 2005*)

Comment: These results are consistent with my clinical experience and my advice for treating depression. Exercise has everything--it's natural mood lifter and improves health in numerous ways—to recommend it over antidepressants. So I'm delighted to see that research is corroborating its value in treating milder forms of depression.



# A Cool Way to Stay Fit This Summer

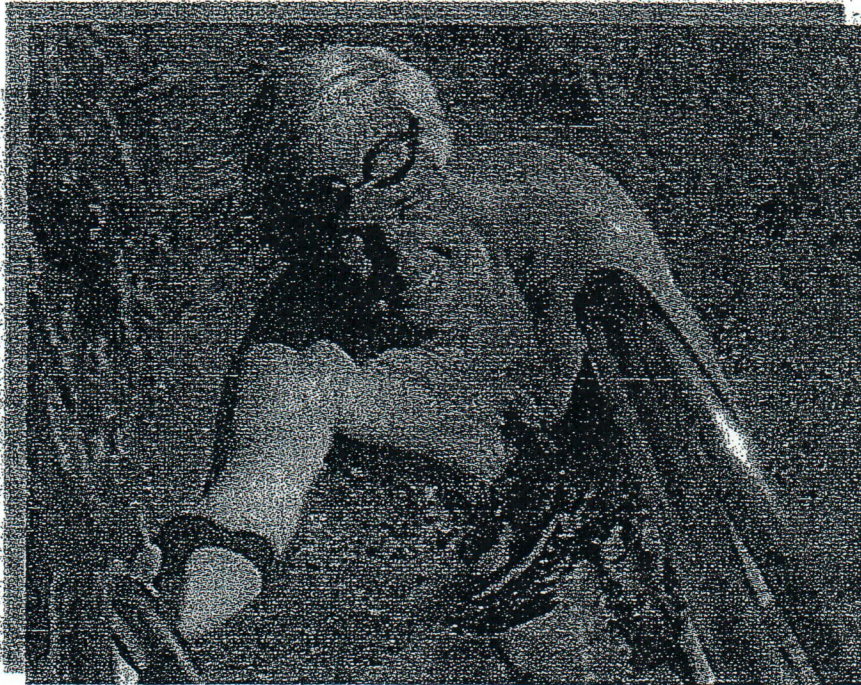
Doctors and other health care professionals are always telling us that regular exercise is vital to good health. But let's face it – some exercise just isn't enjoyable and getting started can be a challenge, especially if you've never exercised before. The solution: Aquatic exercise through Eisenhower Medical Center's Pool Program.

*"...a well-developed 30-minute aquatic exercise program is equal to spending one hour at the gym."*

"Aquatic exercise is the perfect way to ease into exercise and have fun at the same time," says Derek Spinney, PT, CSCS, Director of Rehabilitation Services, Eisenhower Medical Center. "Water exercise can provide strength training using the buoyancy and resistance of water and cardiovascular training. And under the guidance of a well-trained instructor, aquatic exercise can be tailored for almost any individual of any age," he adds.

"If you're concerned about putting excessive pressure on your ankles, knees, hips or back, working out in the water is an especially safe and effective exercise option," Spinney notes. "Any exercise or functional activity can be duplicated in the water.

"And for those of us who claim we don't have time to exercise, aquatic exercise puts that excuse to rest," he continues. "Because it combines muscular and cardiovascular conditioning, a well-developed 30-minute aquatic exercise program is equal to spending one hour at the gym." You don't need any special equipment, although some classes at Eisenhower utilize kickboards, "noodles" or long flotation tubes, inner tubes, webbed gloves,



Styrofoam dumbbell weights and even weighted vests.

Eisenhower Medical Center has the largest indoor pool in the valley and is open year-round for exercise classes and pool therapy. The water exercise classes have been developed by physical therapists, certified strength and conditioning specialists and other staff specially trained in water exercise.

The four-foot deep pool is maintained at a comfortable 89°, and the pool water is kept crystal clear using a state-of-the-art hydrogen peroxide and ultraviolet light disinfecting system instead of chlorine. The facility also offers dressing rooms with showers, lockers and hair dryers.

"We're able to accommodate every individual who wants to use the pool for classes or therapy," Spinney says, noting the hydro-lift chair, ramp, and stairs that lead gradually into the pool, and hand rails that surround the pool and deck.

"Equally important, our classes are afford-

able, and members of the Center for Healthy Living also enjoy a 10 percent discount," he adds.

For more information and a complete pool class schedule, call Eisenhower's Pool Therapy Department at 760-773-2036.

Please note that you must have a physician's referral for pool therapy, and you must register in advance for specific classes.

Enroll your children in swimming lessons at the Eisenhower pool.

Swimming lessons are available in the evenings for children ages 6 months and up. Prices vary, and registration is required. Call Rene's Aquatics at 760-329-3212.

# New Palm Desert Aquatic Center reports brisk business in summer

By Sherry Barkas

The Desert Sun

**PALM DESERT** — The Coachella Valley saw a milder-than-usual summer this year, but that didn't mean people weren't looking for ways to cool off.

Palm Desert's new aquatic center fit the bill, not only for the city's residents, but others in the valley.

The aquatic center, which opened in June, had a better-than-expected July, making more than \$141,000 from admissions, concession stand sales and program enrollments.

Of the 12,318 people who came for a swim, just under 60 percent — or 7,317 — lived outside of Palm Desert.

The figures were presented during the city's Parks and Recreation Commission meeting Tuesday morning.

The numbers far exceed those in the initial study that projected 175 average daily users, or 5,425 for July, with 35 percent coming from outside the city, said Ryan Sten-

If you go

**What:** Palm Desert Aquatic Center

**Where:** 73-751 Magnesia Falls Drive

**Hours:** 5:30 a.m.-dusk Mon.-Fri., 7 a.m.-dusk Sat., 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Sun.

**Cost:** \$2.50 to \$4 for city residents, \$3.75 to \$6 for non-residents

**Information:** (760) 565-7467, [www.pdpool.com](http://www.pdpool.com)

dell, city senior management analyst.

"We're very happy with these results," Palm Desert Mayor Pro Tem Bob Spiegel said.

The \$7.7 million aquatic center, with its competition Olympic-sized pool, a recreational pool that includes two water slides, a splash pool and other features for kids, opened on June 25.

"I would say we did a good job

with designing a center that provides the amenities that youth and families are looking for," said City Manager John Wohlmuth.

Next the city will try to break down where non-residential users are coming from. Then the city can include those areas on its mailing list for fliers promoting the center's various programs.

Admission numbers don't reflect monthly or annual pass users.

"We're working on a monthly report that will better break that down and break out program numbers to see which are working," Stendell said.

The center is beginning its transition from summer to fall use, when College of the Desert, YMCA and other schools become the prominent users of the center.

"The challenge for us now is to see what types of programs will be successful to drive (post-summer) revenues," Wohlmuth said.

**Sherry Barkas** covers the city of Palm Desert for The Desert Sun. She can be reached at [sherry.barkas@thedesertsun.com](mailto:sherry.barkas@thedesertsun.com) or (760) 778-4694.



Connie Maher and her daughter, Shelby, swim near an ADA-compliant pool chair lift at the Palm Desert Aquatic Center on Wednesday afternoon. Some hoteliers are seeking a compromise over a mandate requiring the lifts. JAY CALDERON/THE DESERT SUN

# JUST ADD SALT

## SALT WATER RETURNS TO THE DESERT

TEXT PAMELA WHITNEY

There's an underwater bubbling in the world of swimming pools. More and more people are switching to saline pools, and once they've swum in them they would never again be without their salt water.

My childhood memories of saltwater pools emanate from The Breakers Hotel in Palm Beach, Florida. Floating on the top so easily was glorious and my buoyancy felt magical. In those days they literally piped the ocean water directly into the pool. Well, today's saline pools are very different. They are technologically state-of-the-art, resulting in the healthiest, and most ecologically safe pools in the marketplace. With a saline pool, there are no red eyes, no itchy dry skin, no salty taste, no green hair, no unsafe chemicals, no harsh chlorine smells, and no need to rinse off after your swim.

California Pool's expert on saline pools, Steve Pyle says, "We design and build about 600 pools a year and about 50 percent of our clients are requesting saline pools. Once some-

one has swum in a saline pool they wouldn't swim in anything else. The prospective buyer's biggest concern is that chlorine kills bacteria; once they learn that the saline system pro-



Photo: Chris Horn

duces chlorine, which kills bacteria, they want to install a saline pool for all the many other benefits it provides."

Scott Saunders, the President and CEO of Canyon View Pools, finds the demand for saline pools to be even higher. "At Victoria Falls, about 95 percent of the pools we have built have saline

systems," he says. "In fact about 90 percent of all the pools we currently put in are saline."

"The water in a saline pool," he points out, "contains about 10 percent of the salt that's in a teardrop. Not only is it gentler to the eyes, the water feels better on the skin.

Jerry Pelton, of J.P. Pool Service, has seen many trends come and go in his years running a pool service, and at first he was skeptical. "I thought it was a lot of malarkey," he admits. Then he was persuaded to try one out for himself and his attitude totally changed. "You can really feel the difference on your skin," he declares with enthusiasm. One client of his has a teenage son who suffered from acne. When he switched to a saline system the boy's skin

improved so dramatically that the dermatologist asked why the difference had come about and declared he didn't need to come back for treatment. Teenage skin is a temperamental and unpredictable thing but Jerry is convinced credit belongs to the switch from chlorine to saline. "With a chlorine pool," he points out,



Photo: Chris Horn

It seems that Jarred and Arron just don't want to get out of their grandfather's saline pool in Palm Desert.

## ... MY IMAGE WAS THAT OF POOL TECHNICIANS DUMPING THOUSANDS OF BLUE SALT BOXES (WITH THAT LITTLE GIRL IN THE YELLOW RAIN JACKET ON THE LABEL) INTO POOLS.

"I come along and dump chemicals in your pool and you shouldn't swim in it for a couple of hours afterwards. And when you do you can still feel the chlorine. In a day or two it gets down to an acceptable level then I come back and put more chlorine in! The saline system produces chlorine but it stays at the same, gentle level all the time."

I was curious to learn more about how saline pools functioned, as my image was that of pool technicians dumping thousands of blue salt boxes (with that little girl in the yellow rain jacket on the label) into pools. Today, however, a saline pool has two components – a saltwater chlorinator cell and a specially designed magnet. A salt chlorinator cell produces chlorine by converting sodium chloride (common table salt, but in bigger boxes) into chlorine as mildly salted water passes through the cell. When the chlorine reacts with oxygen in the pool it converts back to salt. The process produces up to one and a half pounds of chlorine per day and is sufficient for sanitizing pools up to 40,000 gallons. Then the cell automatically and intermittently reverses, cleaning itself.

Chris Horn, one of the desert's resident experts, tells me, "We have a real challenge here in the Valley because our water comes from the underground aquifers and thus

absorbs many minerals, resulting in extremely hard water." That's why we have mineral springs with spas so close by. That's also why you have such a difficult time keeping your pool's water line clean. Those minerals literally build up on your pool's stubborn water line, resulting in that impervious, crusty white ring.

Horn has seen his Poolside Saline Purification Systems business in Palm Desert expand 600% over the past two years. He says his customers are hardcore devotees. As one of his clients told him, "When my grandchildren come to visit, I don't even have to rinse them off before putting them into their PJs at bedtime."

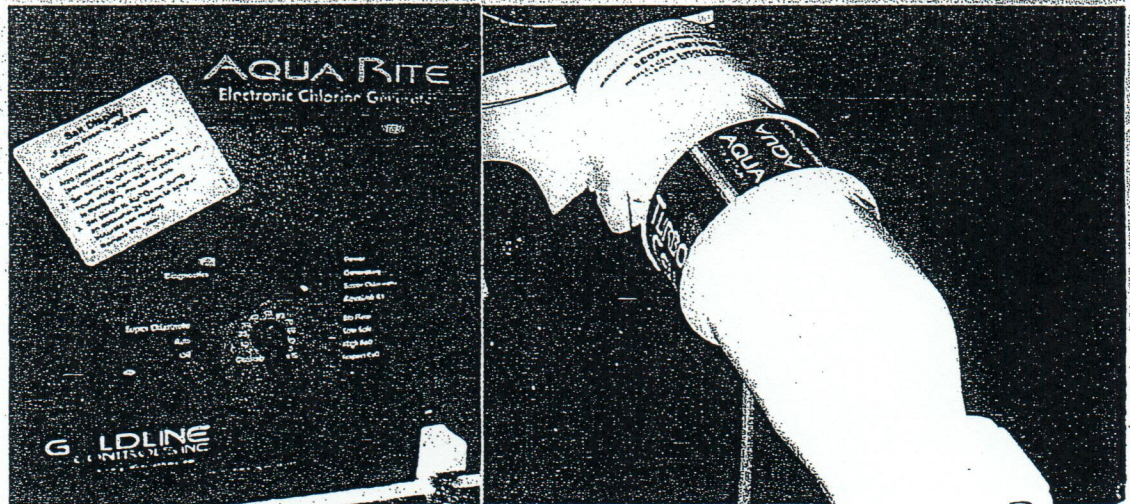
Horn did a great deal of research, prior to selecting Aqua Rite, because the saline pool industry got off to a rocky start in the late 1980s and 90s, due to faulty equipment manufactured in Europe and Australia. Saunders, too, is enthusiastic about Aqua Rite. "It's top of the line," he says. "We've had two warranty calls in one and half years." And with those calls, the service was quick and efficient.

Existing pool equipment can be easily retrofitted. Installation ranges between \$1,300 and \$1,700 and monthly maintenance is about \$100, which is about the same as a chlorine pool. Horn also claims that a side-by-side com-

parison of a saline versus chlorine pool easily demonstrates that the saline pool is less yellow and has a much higher sparkle factor.

Certainly a saline system significantly reduces those hard, crusty, unsightly calcium water lines. Cleaning those has been a problem. "The current method," Horn explains, "is one where guys out here are generally using glass beads, and bead blast the tile edge or patio, using a compressor, pot and hose to blast off the minerals. Those little glass beads would shatter and shoot everywhere — into the pool, flower beds, grass — and would still be in there years later. Not only were they dangerous and not biodegradable, they were able to be ingested and thus unsafe for dogs and possibly small animals and children." Wow! Who knew?

Horn himself now uses the same process and products used to restore the Statue of Liberty a few years ago, which were not only safe but didn't destroy the statue's patina:



The difference between a chlorinated-water pool and a saline pool is the equipment. Above are the control panel and the chlorinator cell for a saline pool.

Photo: Allison McBeer/The Desert Sun

biodegradable sodium bicarbonate or common baking soda (like those yellow and red Arm & Hammer boxes we forget to change in our refrigerators), only it consists of a much coarser grain, which Arm & Hammer manufactures for commercial purposes. When he uses the new product with a compressor to break up the minerals on patio decks and pools, it neutralizes as it travels down the drain. No unsafe chemicals in your pool, grass or flowerbeds!

I came to the desert from the east coast and when you cleaned your water line, it came off with a spray bottle of Simple Green, a stiff brush and a little elbow grease. I never knew that calcium buildup could be such a challenge here. But the good news is, once yours is cleaned, hopefully the environmentally safe way, the saline pool process substantially decreases the mineral water line, especially on Pebble Tec pools.

(Continued on page 64)

(continued from page 55)

Who wants to worry about all this stuff? We just want a beautiful, sparkling clean, healthy pool, especially now that we are able to enjoy our pools again without having to pay a king's ransom to heat them! I've learned there are two kinds of pool owners, those who really love to swim and those who just like to look outside and see a bit of sparkling water in the desert. Saline pools appeal to both groups. Gazing into my crystal ball, I predict that we will see more people in the Coachella Valley retrofitting their existing pools with saline equipment. I also predict that builders, as an incentive and additional amenity, will provide it as standard equipment to prospective new home purchasers. Either way, everyone wins.

Best of all, when you are splashing and floating around, you can rest assured that, not only are you in a healthier pool, but also in some small way you are helping the environment. ■

## For Saline Pool Information:

### Poolside Saline Purification Systems

44558 Santa Ynez Ave.,  
Palm Desert, CA 92260 341-5755

### Canyon View Pools

2295 Tamarisk Road, Palm Springs, CA 92262  
778-2700

### California Pools

74725 Joni Drive Suite A,  
Palm Desert, CA 92260  
340-9000  
[www.californiapools.com](http://www.californiapools.com)

### J. P. Pool Service

Palm Springs  
322-1482

profile

BUSINESS

# Men with Salty Solutions

MARSHALL BROWN

tives and I am happy to, but I am always really excited when I am able to talk people into working with a salt pool environment. I think it's a better solution all around."

Di Pietra, who has been working with pools for over 30 years, latched on to the salt pool treatment process five years ago and has seen his business skyrocket because of it. "I got started in the business as kind of a hold-over, but it has been so lucrative that I've just stuck with it. My wife Michele and I have been running the business for quite a few years now and I have seen a lot of change in the industry. We built our business on the laurels of a good reputation and quality work, and business has been booming with the new treatment option."

According to Di Pietra, there are a great number of reasons saltwater pooling is such a viable alternative to chlorine. "First, we can convert over chlorine systems to salt in less than a day, so the break of changing systems isn't very long at all. Second, the saltwater environment makes its own natural chlorine with a sodium content no greater than half of that found in your tears, so its easily absorbed by the body in comparison to other treatments. But I think the most important advantage is how it feels around your body." Di Pietra says he receives a significant amount of positive feedback from customers who extol the virtues of rejuvenated skin and the soothing feel the water gives them. "It feels so much like the ocean and it's much less abrasive to everything, including tiling and stonework."

Beyond the treatment costs, which Di Pietra calls fair for all involved, the only other maintenance is the replacement of the system's energy source, a titanium power cell, every three years. "Everything else is made out of plastic, so there is really no erosion. And when we do treat a pool with salt, people don't have to wait around to go back in like they do with chlorine. They can jump right back in after our guy leaves and continue the party. As far as our workers, I make sure every one of them is responsible and well-trained, which I handle myself. I am out there checking up on customers all the time, and we all have cell phones if they need to contact us. I grew this business out of recommendations, so I know the value of keeping the pace with people. Hopefully, soon I'll have enough guys to carry the big workload so I can focus more on doing the business end of things."

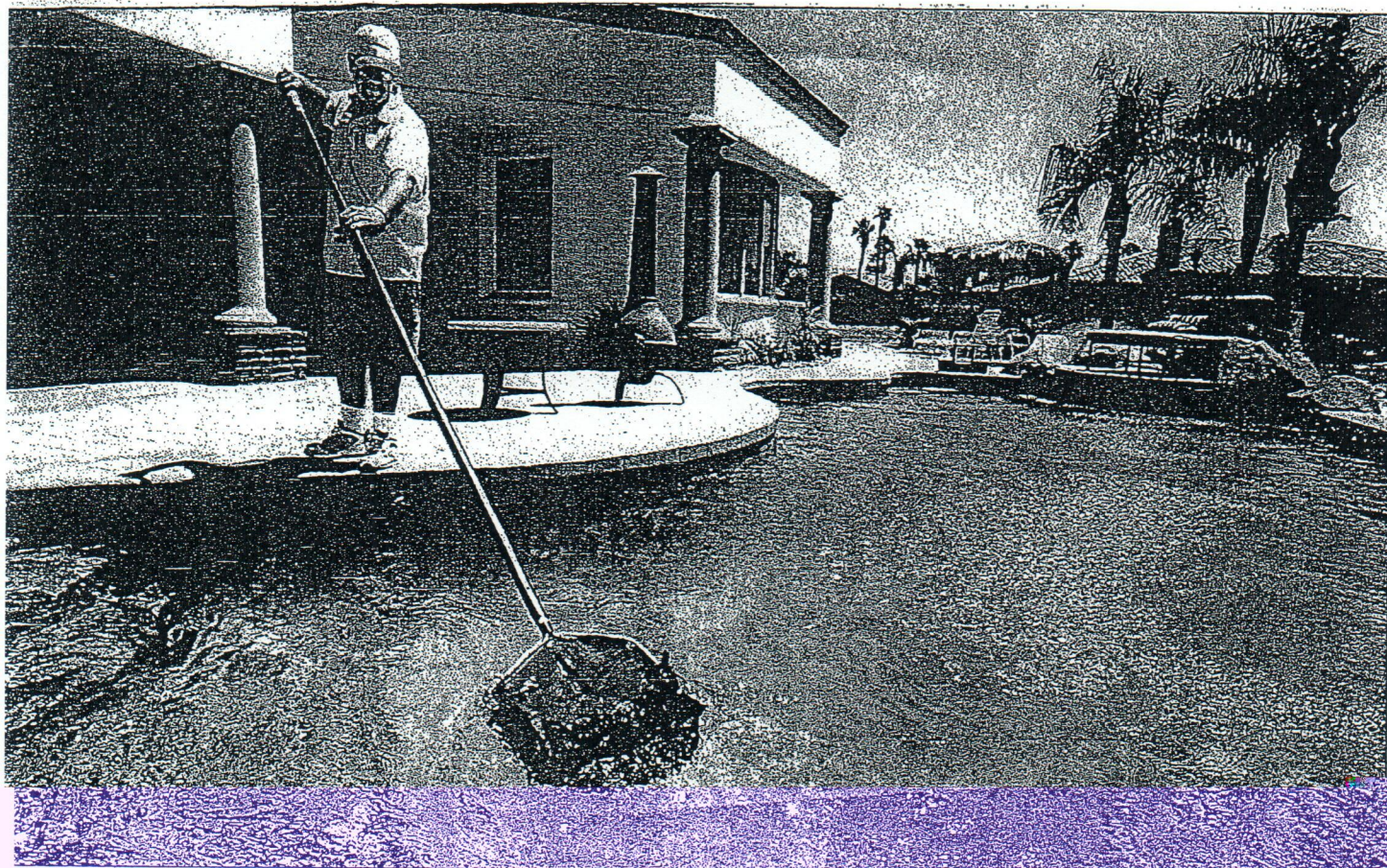


Di Pietra says a large amount of his business, which spans from Palm Springs to Palm Desert currently, comes from the GLBT community. "While I am not gay myself, I got into doing work for people in the community because it's just plain good business sense. Palm Springs has such a big gay population that you would have to be silly not to entertain their needs. I mean I've gotten a lot of looks from other pool guys but I just smile back as I think of all the great customers who appreciate my work. In our gay magazine advertising, which has really picked up our business dramatically, we call our business Mermaid as a little token of appreciation. I jokingly call it a subsidiary. But I think most important of all is the fact that gay couples usually know what they want. That frees me from dealing with too much haggling and that lets me focus on my work." And it's just that work that keeps Mermaid Pool Services singing their siren song, nets in hand and salt in tow.

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Frank Di Pietra of Mermaid Pool Services can be contacted at 760.272.4355 or 760.416.4400.





WADE BYARS, THE DESERT SUN

Dan Pelletier, an employee of A Kool Pool Service, works at a customer's home pool in Palm Desert.

# Toss in the salt

## Salt-water pool systems cut costs, let you swim year-round

BY DOREEN SHENASSA  
THE DESERT SUN

**D**oes your swimming pool have the right "water chemistry" to function properly and stay clean? That's something you might want to consider before taking another dip.

Now that the weather is heating up, you'll want to make sure the pool you cool off in is safe and healthful. "With the extreme heat in the desert, everything affects the chemical balance," said Tim Priehs, owner of A Kool Pool Service since 1991, the first company in the Coachella Valley to offer salt-water swimming pool systems.

"With triple-digit weather, sand, debris and leaves will make pool water fluctuate," he said.

To maintain a chemical balance, a sanitizer is used to kill bacteria and help control algae growth. The most common sanitizers are chlorine- and bromine-based compounds, said Priehs. And because these compounds must be added routinely to the pool during the summer to maintain high enough levels to prevent bacterial growth, it can irritate the eyes, skin and can damage hair. "With the salt water, you

He suggests converting your pool to salt water, or installing a cooling system, both of which he said will save money in the long run.

"With the salt system, you can use the pool year-round," said Priehs. "It keeps chemical costs low and helps keep water costs down. And there will never be a time you can't use the pool because of fluctuation and chemical balances." Priehs provides standard pool services but said it costs his clients more from May to October because he has to add more chlorine to pools during that time.

He also recommends an energy-efficient pool cooler that lowers the temperature of a typical, 30,000-gallon residential swimming pool up to 15 degrees. Priehs said it costs about \$2 per day to operate.

It costs about \$1,500 to install a cooling or salt system, but Priehs said that there is no downside to either. "If the water chemistry is right on, you'll have crystal clear water."

For more information, contact A Kool Pool Service at 324-4488 or [www.akoolpool.com](http://www.akoolpool.com)

Doreen Shenassa can be reached at 778-4684 or [dshenassa@desertsun.com](mailto:dshenassa@desertsun.com)

## HOT TIPS

HOW TO SURVIVE A DESERT SUMMER

### More to come

More summer survival tips coming your way:

**Sunday:** Saving money: where to sign up to save on your electric bills.

**Monday:** Water conservation practices in the desert.

**Tuesday:** Car maintenance and accessories you can buy to keep the car cool.

**Online:** Read more of our Hot Tips series on surviving the summer heat

Let me explain why I like salt water pools. Chlorine when used in regular swimming pools is delivered by liquid or tablet and has to be replaced constantly and is toxic and irritating especially to the skin. It has to be added to disinfect our drinking water but can be filtered at the tap.

When salt is added to swimming pools then passed through an electrolysis system, the salt becomes sodium and chlorine. However it is balanced and basically the electrical pull between the two elements prevents dissipation. Also salt water doesn't destroy the pool's plumbing either. Re read the attached articles on saline systems discussed by the pool maintenance people. Periodic salt which is very cheap has to be added when evaporated water has to be replaced or if too much rain (ha ha!) occurs.

A salt water pool when properly maintained is like the tears of your eyes and therefore no eye burning occurs. Salt or saline solutions run through our bodies. The skin and nervous systems which are both derived ectodermally seem to like to be bathed in salt water. Playing and exercising in salt water pools is a very simple solution for the multiple medical problems we develop. For example psoriasis, eczema, acne, folliculitis, stasis changes of the legs i.e. swelling, rashes and skin ulcers all respond. "Dilute the dilemma" is another expression I often use in the treatment of skin maladies. All the other benefits of pool therapy are well described in the article "Everybody Into The Pool" by Andrea Wyatt which should be re read.

There is no better place than the desert to use all these swimming pools especially if they are heated in the winter. I truly believe if we exercise regularly in these pools (preferably salt) then our doctor visits would decrease. We have always had the answers to health and all we had to do was look into our own backyards.

Remember, your health is the most important thing in your life, and the number one way to maintain your health is exercise and we all know it. The approach I have outlined is a win-win. Instead of complaining about money or why you shouldn't convert one pool to a saline system at your next homeowner's meeting discuss what I have said. Remember money won't do you any good after you are six feet under. If you don't travel first class your kids will.

I would like to end with a quote from Dr. Masaru Emoto who has studied the structuring of water:

**"Water has a very important message for us. Water is telling us to take a deep look at our selves. When we look at our selves through the mirror of water the message becomes crystal clear. We know that human life is directly connected to the quality of our water, both within and all around us."**

Sincerely Yours,

Donald R Scott M.D.

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