



Sharon Harrison
Founder / President

Dear Home Owner,

Happy Valentines Day!

February's newsletter is on SWIMMING POOLS.

Being a former swimming pool owner is much like being a former boat owner. Personally, I admit how happy I was the first day I bought each one and how DELIGHTED I was the day I got rid of each one. When you own a swimming pool, you have to be sure the pool is safe and clean. Maintaining a pool is time consuming and can be labor intensive. You have to know what you are doing.

Helping your Buyer prepare for pool ownership **will make you a hero**. Most first time pool owners are not prepared for the time consuming job combined with the cost of chemicals, too. I have found it doesn't take long for a homeowner to hire a service and they need to put this amount into their household budgets before they purchase this fun toy.

There is nothing that will make a family happier than a swimming pool. Kind of like a puppy- no one is prepared to care for it after it arrives. While providing exercise, socialization and relaxation there is nothing better. But, the downside is the maintenance that must be done because the cost to repair is very high.

Home Inspectors are not allowed to disassemble equipment. They can only do a visual inspection. Therefore, when purchasing a house with a pool, it is my strong recommendation to have a separate pool inspection. The equipment is so complex and expensive: it may save your client heart aches and cash.

Purchase the optional Pool Package. I promise you, home warranty companies will spend more money on pool repairs than any other option they offer. The reason is simple: water and motors don't mix! Please point out that the home warranty covers only selected items not the physical pool but the primary equipment only. They need to read the contract thoroughly.

Suggest they contact a pool company and ask them for a lesson in "Pool School." The biggest mistake is in not knowing how to take care of this complex equipment.

DAILY tasks (YOU HAVE TO WALK AROUND THE POOL EVERYDAY):

1. It takes about an hour a day to take care of an 18-foot pool. If your pool is much larger consider a couple hours the minimum you'll need for pool maintenance each day. All sorts of bacteria can grow in untreated pools, causing illness, particularly in kids.
2. Ensuring the pH balance is at an acceptable level. The sunnier the climate you live in (Dallas/Ft Worth Metroplex) the more you're going to have to pay attention to water chemical balance which can damage the equipment and void the manufacturer's warranty and water evaporation.



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3. Make sure the filter is working properly.
4. Check the water level DAILY. The most common mistake that causes equipment to burn up is when the water level is low.
5. Use a net for scooping out large objects, like leaves. You'll also need to run the vacuum daily or weekly, depending upon how many swimmers there have been and how much debris has fallen into the pool. You'll need a nylon brush or glove with which to clean the walls of the pool, usually weekly.
6. Filters must be cleaned.
7. Check equipment for pests (especially fire ants) they love to get in and eat the electrical equipment. Have your pest service check your pool equipment when they come to spray.

PEST TIPS

Carpenter Ants are making their appearance!

Termites and Carpenter Ants have many similarities but they are different.

Please compare:

Instead of living in a "colony" under the ground, the carpenter ant nest is usually located in trees, walls or foliage. Generally, there are at least five active groups that come from one nest. They are found in doors, windows, wood that has been water damaged, dry rot wood or old termite decay.

They are nocturnal, so you generally don't see them in the daytime.

You cannot "spot" treat them because they will send another team of reinforcement ants from the nest.

There are four steps to eradicate Carpenter Ants:

1. Cut back all foliage that is touching the house because it has created a "natural bridge" from trees and landscape where most nests are located.
2. Baiting: chemical pellets are placed in the attic and around the foundation of the home and in dense foliage.
3. Treat infected area with a flushing chemical that kills on contact.
4. Chemically Dust areas that are in high moisture locations.



Pier and Beam homes are harder to treat because you must “crawl” and apply chemical dust in the attic and under the house. The great news is that the dusting chemical will eradicate more pests than just the Carpenter Ants under the house at the same time!

It will take 90 days for the chemicals to work (just like termites). So, after the treatment, you must be patient... which is hard.

Nations Home Warranty offers Carpenter Ant Treatment coverage performed by a licensed pest company for \$149 plus tax (slab or pier and beam) and it is guaranteed for 90 days. You may find less expensive prices advertised, but remember that we will be here to “back you up” if there are service problems.



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