

Aquatic Facility Rules Fact Sheet #6 PR

What you should know about the Code

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OAR 333-060-1000 Definitions, Chapter 2

“Underwater Shelf” means a shallow, flat area within a pool that extends horizontally from the pool wall. It is designed to be submerged in water, typically with a depth of 8 to 24 inches, providing a shallow space for lounging, play, or easy entry into the pool. Also referred to as a tanning ledge, sun shelf, or Baja shelf.

Underwater shelves must meet specific design and safety standards outlined in 4.5.18 to ensure user comfort and minimize safety risks.

PUBLIC HEALTH REASONS:

Underwater shelves provide swimmers with a shallow area to rest or relax while still being submerged. These features must meet safety standards to reduce risks such as slip-and-fall accidents, improper water circulation, and lack of visibility. Since small children often use these areas, it is crucial that proper supervision is provided at all times to prevent accidents. Additionally, drop-off ledges are prohibited to avoid the risk of accidental drownings, as these can create sudden depth changes that children might not anticipate. Proper design, supervision, and maintenance of underwater shelves are crucial to maintaining pool safety and health standards for pool that incorporate an underwater shelf.

Underwater Shelves— Plan Review

Underwater shelves are shallow, sloped areas in a pool where swimmers can rest or sit while remaining partially submerged.

To maintain safety and ensure that the pool operates effectively, several design guidelines must be followed:

- **Construction Depth:** Underwater shelves must be placed in areas with a water depth of 3 feet 6 inches (1.1 meters) or shallower and should not exceed a maximum water depth of 12 inches (30.5 cm).
- **Slip-Resistant Edges:** The leading edges of underwater shelves must feature slip-resistant, color-contrasting nosing to make them easily visible both from the deck and underwater, reducing the risk of accidents.
- **Water Circulation:** The pool must provide a turnover rate of 60 minutes or less, and skimmers should be placed to ensure effective skimming. Additionally, a perimeter overflow system (gutter) or strategically positioned skimmers should be installed to keep the water clear.
- **Floor Inlets and Depth Markings:** Floor inlets are required at a rate of one for every 400 square feet of the shelf area, and depth markings should be placed according to the regulations set forth in 4.5.18, ensuring clear and consistent depth information for swimmers.

- **Steps and Signage:** Steps should lead into water depths no greater than 3 feet 6 inches, and signage with the message "All children must be supervised by an adult" must be displayed near the shelf in at least 2-inch high letters.



Underwater shelves/ledges are also called baja shelves, tanning shelves or sun shelves

