

DOCKETED

Docket Number:	19-DECARB-01
Project Title:	Decarbonization
TN #:	233187
Document Title:	Swim Chem, Inc. Comments - Swimming Pool Industry Comments
Description:	N/A
Filer:	System
Organization:	Swim Chem, Inc.
Submitter Role:	Public
Submission Date:	5/28/2020 9:05:39 AM
Docketed Date:	5/28/2020

*Comment Received From: Swim Chem, Inc.
Submitted On: 5/28/2020
Docket Number: 19-DECARB-01*

Swimming Pool Industry Comments

Additional submitted attachment is included below.



Commissioner Andrew Mc Alister
California Energy Commission
1516 9th Street, MS 34
Sacramento, California 95814

May 28, 2020

Dear Commissioner Mc Alister:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide additional comments relative to the Building Decarbonization Docket Log (19-DECARB-01). I am submitting these comments as Chairman of the Board of the California Pool & Spa Association (CPSA) as well as my personal swimming pool industry company, Swim Chem. CPSA is a statewide trade association that represents all segments of the swimming pool and hot tub industry in California. This includes manufacturers of equipment to operate swimming pools, hot tubs, ancillary equipment, testing and safety products, outdoor kitchens and recreation areas, swimming pool and spa builders, subcontractors, and the swimming pool maintenance and service industry. Swim Chem is a large swimming pool service, repair, remodel and construction company in northern CA. We service approximately 4,500 residential swimming pools on a regular basis as well as the equipment repairs and replacements. We also do some remodeling and construction of new swimming pools.

CA represents the largest swimming pool market in the world! And it is growing every year in large numbers since coming out of the economic downturn a few years ago. The Covid-19 situation and the Governor's shelter in place orders that forced many Californians to be homebound for more than 8 weeks, has actually led to an increase in new pool construction and above ground pool sales. I have spoken with two of the more prominent and large pool builders in Sacramento this last week and they both report dramatic spikes in leads. One of them surpassed his all-time company high for leads in a month...by nearly 50%! This pandemic has already proven that Californians are searching, more than ever, for the California dream, the California staycation. A backyard swimming pool with all of the amenities is a BIG part of that. With the travel fears due to this pandemic, I believe that this is not a short-term reaction and will continue.

The California dream backyard with a swimming pool, a connected spa, an outdoor kitchen, fire features and a fire pit are desirable and attainable for the average Californian. Natural gas is a necessary infrastructure for that dream to be fully realized. I believe that a balance energy program is essential not only for the swimming pool/backyard industries, but for California in general. There are applications where electric is appropriate, but also applications that require gas and/or solar. A balanced solution is the best option for CA and can produce reduced carbon emissions. Look at how far we have come in natural gas appliances efficiencies over the years.

Heating an inground spa for instance is much better suited to gas heating. Trying to heat a 500-600 gallon spa with an electric heater would take too long to satisfy the customer. Inground spas are generally not kept hot, they are heated on demand and thus are better suited to gas heating. Solar heat is great for swimming pools and can extend the swimming season in CA but cannot keep a pool warm for use in the winter. Again, gas is the most efficient and cost effective option. Heat pumps or hybrid units are available and could be a beneficial option in some applications. Heat pumps alone, however, have limitations due to the CA climate.

In addition to the impracticality of trying to heat residential swimming pools with electric heaters is the cost. Electricity is much more expensive than gas and takes much longer to heat large bodies of water like swimming pools and spas. That same problem increases dramatically when you are talking about a large commercial swimming pool. We see many 250,000-1,000,000 gallon swimming pools.

I am strongly in favor of a balanced approach to energy solutions in California. Solar, gas and electricity all have their strong points and places where they would be the preferred option due to efficiency, cost and logistical considerations. We should not be depriving Californians the right to choose based on their particular considerations. If we build new development without natural gas supplies to the properties, we are denying that choice. We should be better than that.

Jerry Wallace
Chairman of the Board
California Pool & Spa Association (CPSA)

Jerry Wallace
President

Phone: 916-332-6111
Fax: 916-332-6466

P.O. Box 41497
Sacramento, Ca 95841

jerrywallace@sbcglobal.net
www.swimchemsac.com

