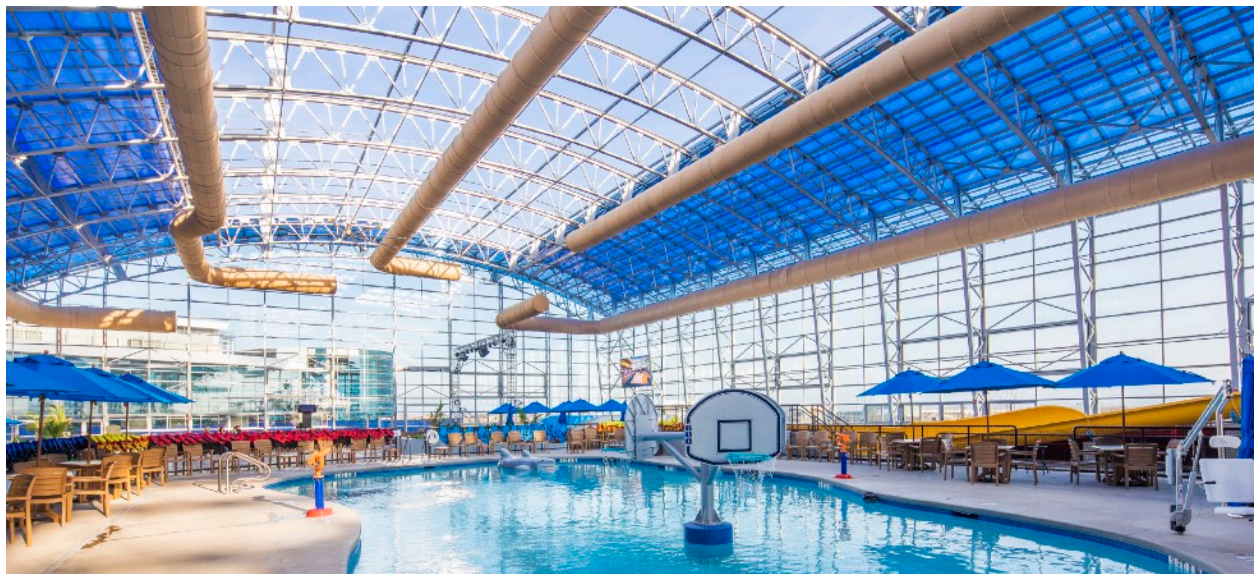


# Who is Ahead of the Curve in this Time of Pandemic?

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# Part 1:

## What do we do?

During a global pandemic, operators and owners of indoor waterparks are wondering where do we go from here? You may be asking yourself questions like:

**“When do we open up this summer?”**

**“What changes do we need to make to open in the future?” or**

**“How are we going to make the new normal financially viable?”**

Teams are now actively discussing how to address these very issues, and where a pivot will be necessary.

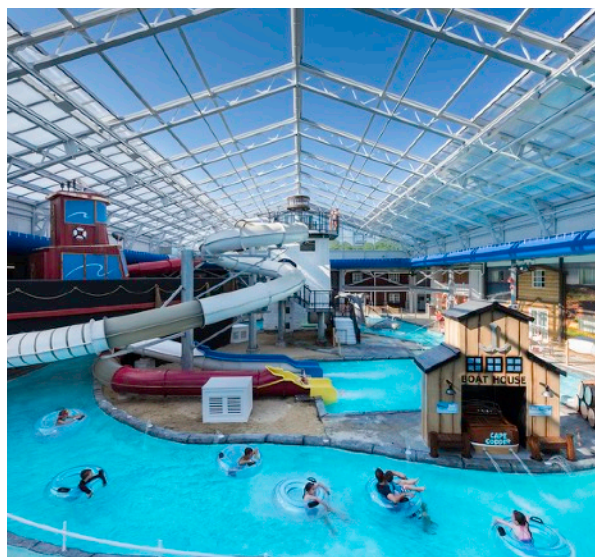
Some outdoor waterparks have opted to remain closed for the summer of 2020, due to the inherent cost in ramping up for the season with training/staffing. Others will only operate at minimal capacity for the foreseeable season. For parks with a short season, it may simply not be “worth it” this year to open; a sad but fiscally conservative decision where needed.

However, indoor water parks employ their staff year-round. Staff count may expand and contract due to demand, but

with the versatility to adapt their facilities regardless of season, indoor parks are riding on a decision of WHEN and HOW to reopen, and not IF.

Locally mandated social distancing guidelines and capacity guidelines will be a key part of every waterpark’s reopening plan. Like most businesses, owners and operators know that their viability to keep going is reliant on sales, so at some point, the doors must re-open.

**Is your waterpark ready? Or are there vital upgrades needed**





As we all now know - times have changed, likely forever. Will a park that was “totally fine” last year be a park that accommodates the future, accounting for health and hygiene standards brought to the surface by COVID-19? From here on out, new standards aren’t temporary, they’re rewriting the future of health & building codes.

What are the items to consider as part of emerging waterpark renovation for existing parks, and future waterpark design/operation? What are the top priorities and considerations? Most importantly, what actions need to be made in order to put these waterparks ahead of the curve as they facilitate a reopening?

## **Here are a few of the top things that come to mind:**

1. **Cleanliness & Materials:** Global public health strategies now include frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects that are touched by multiple people is important to reduce the spread of infection. Easily cleanable materials are recommended.<sup>1</sup>
2. **Ventilation:** Typical indoor pool ventilation standards are still not enough for waterparks to reduce chloramine related illness due to the density of guests and splashing water<sup>2</sup>. During this pandemic, perhaps more than ever, natural ventilation and the use of fresh air are recommended to reduce the spread of airborne viruses.<sup>3</sup>
3. **Daylight:** There is undeniable evidence that day-lit spaces hold the potential to yield substantial benefits, including increased energy savings, increased revenue in retail applications, and improvements to human health and productivity.<sup>4</sup>

## Where do we go from here?

Parks built with non-corrosive materials like aluminum have a significant advantage both from a strength and durability perspective, plus from a cleanliness one. A bright, open space that ventilates naturally, and one that isn't corroded makes these parks not only seem cleaner, but they will also be cleaner if proper procedures are implemented.

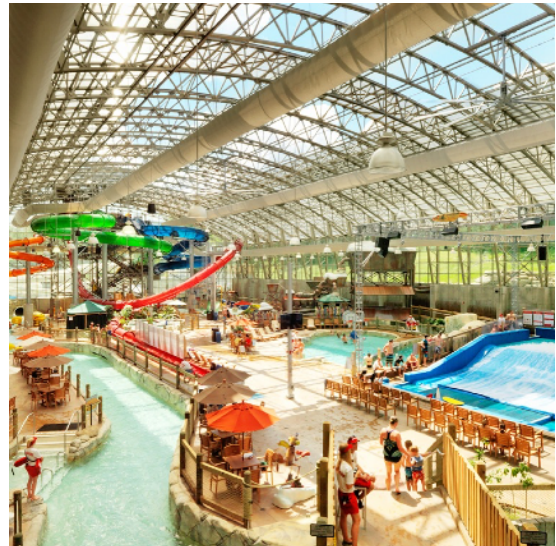
And, per the experts, using natural ventilation saves owners money and allows operators to provide guests and staff with a safer and healthier environment which may reduce the risk of virus transmission.

This is a win-win for owners and operators.

### Waterparks of the Future.

The concepts of what constitutes good indoor water parks are now different, and they won't default back to what was once acceptable. This pandemic highlights that parks who have already seen these trends are in fact, ahead of the curve.

Parks that opt for these choices use less energy and are cheaper to operate and maintain every year.



**And now, it turns out these parks may in fact be safer for guests!**

***New studies demonstrate the correlation between the transmission of COVID-19 in closed environments vs. open air circulation. In a recent Japan study, the odds of a primary case transmitting COVID-19 in a closed environment was 18.7x greater compared to an open-air environment.<sup>5</sup>***

Parks that shifted to modern principles early on have long been reaping the benefits of daylight, fresh air, and a clean structure, while sharing these benefits with their staff and guests. These parks are not only ahead of the curve, but they'll have the privilege of opening with more ease amidst "new normal" demands from this global pandemic.

**OpenAire** has had the pleasure of building waterparks around the globe, challenging the stereotypes of traditional indoor parks. Our mutual goal is always to help them lead the way in creating enjoyable, practical and beautiful spaces, making custom solutions to suit their exact spaces and needs. From the northern border to the deep south, OpenAire supports clients in creating water parks for all seasons that are bound to “wow.” This includes:



- A top-five park in Texas; Epic Waters, the largest indoor Waterpark in the USA
- Kalahari in the Pocono Mountains Pennsylvania
- Zehnder’s Splash Village in Michigan
- Pirate’s Cay in Illinois
- Jay Peak’s Pump House Waterpark in Vermont
- Water-Zoo Indoor Water Park in Oklahoma.

Contact us to see how we can support your future waterpark vision, or assist in modifying your existing park to accommodate the future of improved daylight, hygiene, ventilation, and cleanliness.

### **Footnotes:**

<sup>1</sup> CDC Workplace Safety and Health; *Investigation of Employee Symptoms at an Indoor Waterpark*, Lilia Chen MS, Health Hazard Evaluation Report HETA 2007-0163-3062, Great Wolf Lodge, Mason, Ohio, June 2008.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Study: Restaurant Outbreak In China Suggests Limits To Airborne Transmission of COVID-19*, 22 APRIL 2020, SF NEWS, Jay Barmann, <https://sfist.com/2020/04/22/study-restaurant-covid-19-outbreak-in-china/>

<sup>4</sup> *The Benefits of Natural Light: Research supports daylighting’s positive effect on building performance and human health.* Kevin Van Den Wymelenberg. [architecturallighting.com](http://architecturallighting.com); March 19, 2014

<sup>5</sup> *Closed environments facilitate secondary transmission of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)* Hiroshi Nishiura, Hitoshi Oshitani, Tetsuro Kobayashi, Tomoya Saito, Tomimasa Sunagawa, Tamano Matsui, Takaji Wakita, MHLW COVID-19 Response Team, Motoi Suzuki, *medRxiv* 2020.02.28.20029272; doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.02.28.20029272>,