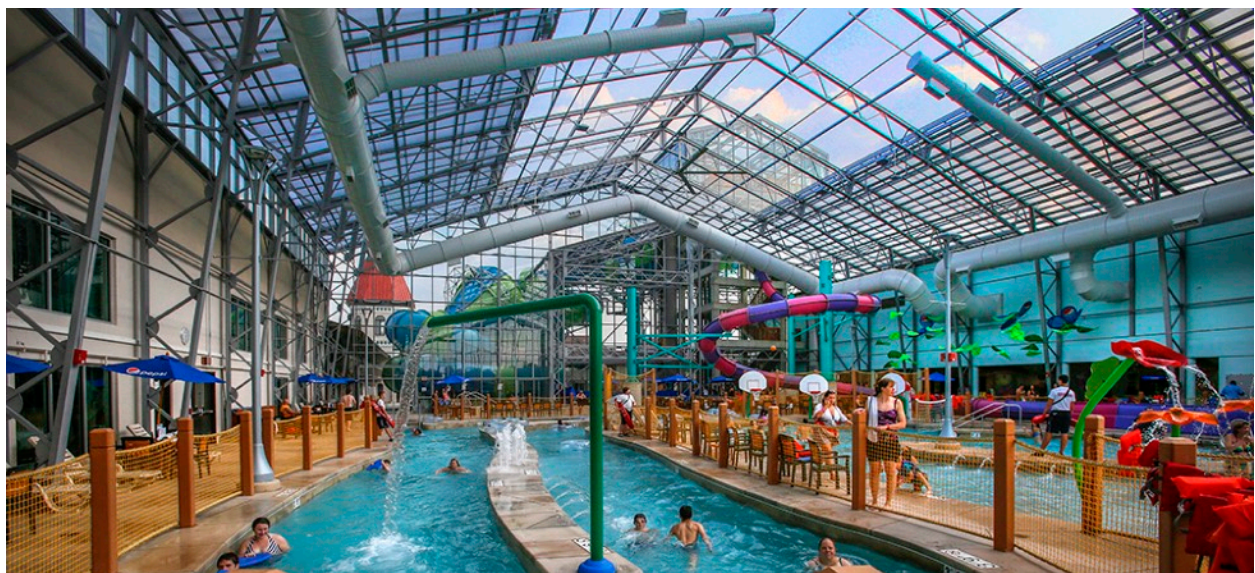


Safer, Cleaner Waterparks are the New Norm.

Nancy Patterson, MBA, B.Arch,
Director Design & Business Development, OpenAire



Part 2:

Cleanliness & Materials

Health care professionals and government officials have clearly stated that increasing the frequency and thoroughness of cleaning is compulsory in order to prevent the spread of virus through contact. Global public health re-opening strategies include cleaning and disinfecting surfaces and PPE (personal protective equipment) as the basic minimum when opening.

The New Normal.

The CDC, in their article titled “Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes” states:

Normal routine cleaning with soap and water will decrease how much of the virus is on surfaces and objects, which reduces the risk of exposure. In addition, disinfection using EPA-approved disinfectants against COVID-19 can also help reduce the risk. Frequent disinfection of surfaces and objects touched by multiple people is important.¹



Clearly, parks will require new protocols and necessary PPE, with frequent disinfection playing a mandatory role in all staff duty expectations. This includes furniture, railings, tubes, lockers, counters, furniture, ATMs, etc. that staff and guests touch and comes into contact with regularly.



There is no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread directly to humans from water in pools, hot tubs or spas, or water play areas. Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (for example, with chlorine or bromine) of pools, hot tubs or spas, and water playgrounds should kill the virus that causes COVID-19.²

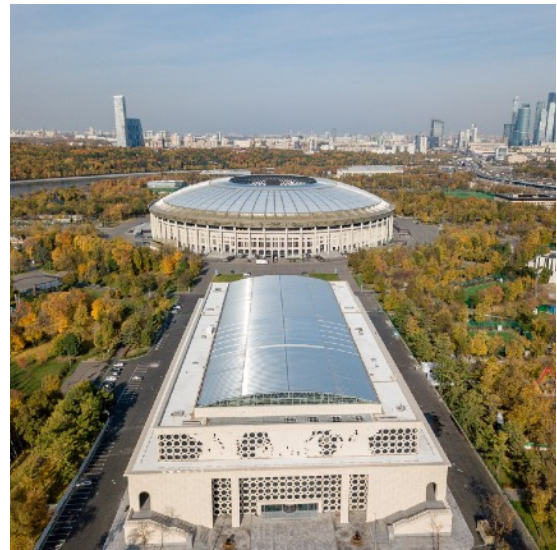
In addition, scheduling for more significant maintenance cleaning and repairs will likely require more time than previously needed. However, some things will prove to be challenging to clean. Highly themed parks may need to implement no contact zones for theme displays that cannot be properly disinfected. Parks with easier-to-clean surfaces, columns, walls, etc, that are metal or glass will be a breeze to clean, and will likely increase their clients' perception of whether the park is clean.

Those in the industry know that older indoor waterparks continuously perform maintenance around the park as the facility slowly deteriorates. The attractions and pools of course, require work, as do the attractions, pumps, and all the other behind-the-scenes equipment. Truthfully, many old parks have opted not to regularly “upgrade” interiors (until they are required to) due to the cost, design, theme, and so forth. This may no longer be acceptable, both by health code and guests.

Guests don’t want to risk getting sick, and a waterpark definitely doesn’t want to have to re-close should an outbreak occur. The detrimental impact to their reputation could prove insurmountable.

Evaluate How to Adapt.

Take a look at your waterpark’s walls, the attractions, the theming, and more. Can they be cleaned? How long do they stay clean? Materials historically used to build waterparks are subject to intense chloramines which attack and corrode the buildings, slide towers, railings, and pools. Literally every surface is under assault, whether they are wood, steel, or some combination of traditional building materials.



The CDC states; Another way to reduce the risk of exposure is to make long-term changes to practices and procedures. These could include reducing the use of porous materials used for seating, leaving some doors open to reduce touching by multiple people, opening windows to improve ventilation, or removing objects in your common areas.³

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 also opens and ventilates naturally, simply doesn’t corrode. That makes these parks not only seem cleaner, but they will also be cleaner if proper procedures are implemented.

Avoiding the use of porous and corrosive materials will help maintain the cleanliness and health of your facility making your building components last as long as possible.

Aluminum is lightweight, high-strength, corrosion-resistant and widely recycled. It maximizes building efficiency by balancing the functions of heating, cooling, lighting, shading and ventilation. In addition, aluminum in buildings has been proven to last for multiple decades with minimal maintenance, lowering the lifecycle footprint of a building.⁴

Perhaps this time of global crisis means that the design of these spaces will inherently change. Perhaps bright and light will be the new norm? Only time will tell, but global theme designers will surely provide innovation in this area.

The concepts of what constitutes a 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.

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:

¹ Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes, May 7, 2020, Content source: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

² <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>

³ Reopening Guidance for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Spaces, Workplaces, Businesses, Schools, and Homes, May 7, 2020, Content source: National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD), Division of Viral Diseases, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/reopen-guidance.html>

⁴ <https://www.aluminum.org/news/aluminum-association-statement-new-federal-building-efficiency-standards>