

## HURRICANE CHARLEY AND YOUR POOL

Hurricane Charley did a tremendous amount of damage to homes, pools, enclosures and landscapes (see related article on landscape care after a hurricane)

**Where should you begin? First, always think safety first! If your pool pump went under water, plan on replacing it. Unplug it or turn the breakers off so when power is restored there isn't an electrical hazard. Secondly, before we can get the pool back into shape, we have to get all the junk and debris out. This includes enclosures, trees, branches, sand, cinder blocks, patio furniture, fish, jellyfish or some of the other weirder things we are finding in our pools. If you don't have power yet, it is a good idea to add chlorine, shock, Clorox or whatever to help kill off anything bad and maybe we can blue up the pool.**

**But most of all, most of our questions seem to fall under several broad categories:**

**1. Sea/Salt Water in Pool:**

A small amount of saltwater contamination is not generally a problem once we get filtration going and our chlorine levels up. If your pool was covered by saltwater, we recommend your pool be drained and the water replaced at the earliest opportunity. Be sure your well point is operable and is used when draining your pool. We did see from Gabriel where some of the minerals in the salt water caused some staining. If staining occurs we can do an acid wash or try various stain treatments. These stains are generally considered cosmetic and once the pool is balanced, we should not have any health concerns.

**2. Pool Cages:**

We've had several calls asking if pool service should be continued if the pool enclosure was destroyed. The answer is – of course! We will certainly want to keep your pool balanced and circulating and usable during the time you're waiting for a new cage. You may want to consider upgrading to more frequent cleaning or consider temporally renting a pool cleaner from us to help keep your pool clean.

**3. Pool Staining:**

Should your pool get any nails or screws or pieces of metal in it, its likely there is going to be a rust spot stain. If this happens, we have a tool called an acid cup, which is very effective at removing small surface stains. This may help ease your mind knowing we have a very cheap but effective way to clean surface stains.

**4. Damage to Equipment:**

Electric pumps, motors and heaters don't like saltwater. There may be salt damage even if the water didn't actually cover your equipment or if you don't even live on the water! Salt damage will become evident fairly soon and there may be several symptoms such as loud bearings, motors seizing up abruptly and tripping breakers, heaters leaking or not warming. Should you experience any of these symptoms, let us know and we can diagnose salt damage and help with any insurance questions.

We hope the above suggestions are helpful. Things may look pretty hopeless right now, especially on our barrier islands, but we will get through this. We will need to work hard, pick ourselves up and brush ourselves off and remake this place once again into a community we all know and love.

