

POOL ALONE CASE STUDY H²O Xtream

AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

H²O Xtream is situated in Upper Hutt which is located 40 minutes north of Wellington City. The resident population is 38,415 made up of predominantly European (82%). The remainder of the community is Maori (10%), Pacific (3%), Asian (3%) and the remainder listed as other.



In the immediate area, there are 11 primary schools (2 with Intermediate), 2 Intermediates, and 4 secondary schools with decile ratings from 6 – 10. The average income is \$21,000 per person ¹.

FACILITY OVERVIEW

H²O Xtream comprises of:

- 25 metre pool
- Wave pool with rapid river
- Toddlers pool
- Two hydro slides
- Speed slide
- Spa
- Sauna
- Steam Room

Total attendance at H²O Xtream is 255,000 per year (not including spectators)

CURRENT POOL ALONE POLICY

The Pool Alone Policy as set out below was put in place in 2004.

All under 8's must have a supervising adult within arms reach at all times. Under 8's must be accompanied by an adult caregiver aged 16 or over who is responsible for them whilst in the facility.

All under 5's must have a swimming adult with them at all times. A ratio of one adult to two children under the age of five must be adhered to.



All children under 8 are issued with an arm band to enable staff to easily identify that they are required to have a caregiver within arms reach at all times.

If an under 8 is left in the facility without supervision all effort is to be made to get in touch with parent or relative. If this is not possible the police are rung to come and collect the child/ren.

How is the Policy working?

The bands help to ensure lifeguards know when a child is under 8 and should be under direct supervision. This means they can get the child out of the water and back in to the supervision of the caregiver. However, even with the bands and information provided by way of notices and verbally at reception some caregivers still seem to be quite ambivalent about their children's safety in an aquatic environment.

Requiring adults to swim with the under 5's does reduce the number of rescues that lifeguards would otherwise have to perform. Particularly with additional risks such as moving water and changes in depth.

For further information please contact Mike Ryan, Recreation Services Manager, mike.ryan@uhcc.govt.nz

¹ All information is based on Statistics New Zealand from 2001 Census information

