



## **Stop Picking on Pools, Joe!**

### ***APSP Asks for Clarification on VP Biden's Remarks Regarding Pools and Federal Stimulus***

#### **Key Messages**

- The Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (APSP) urges Vice President Joe Biden to reconsider his “no swimming pools in this money” remark, regarding the federal stimulus package and swimming pools
- Public pools provide a recreational outlet for those who are suffering most during hard economic times, the working and middle class
- Public pools must comply with the federally mandated Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act to avoid entrapment injuries, which may require investments from states and municipalities
- Failure to maintain public pools results in increased economic, health, and safety problems
- Community pools and playgrounds are part of America's infrastructure and deserving of federal stimulus funding

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**Alexandria, VA (March 17, 2009)** — The Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (APSP) urges Vice President Joe Biden to re-evaluate his remarks prohibiting the federal stimulus package to be used in the construction and servicing of swimming pools. Community pools and playgrounds are assets that must be maintained to allow safe use by America's families. Failure to support public pools will result in the loss of opportunity for families to engage in a healthy and enjoyable activity.

“Community pools and playgrounds are an important part of American infrastructure and are deserving of federal stimulus funding,” said Bill Weber, president and CEO of APSP. “The impact will most heavily effect those getting hit the hardest during these tough economic times, the middle and working classes. Similar to the relief measures of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Great Depression, we have to provide these facilities for all to access, not just the wealthy.”

A number of the public pools constructed by the WPA are still in operation today. Prohibiting states and municipalities from investing in swimming pool facilities is particularly devastating now, as many communities are working hard to bring their facilities into compliance with the federally mandated Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act for entrapment avoidance. In some cases, the cost of compliances is high enough to keep a pool from opening this coming Memorial Day.

Furthermore, poorly maintained pools may expose families to various health and safety risks. Notably, West Nile virus and Legionnaire's disease are common health threats

associated with improperly maintained pools. Additionally, without a community pool available, children will not be able to swim in a safe, supervised environment and may be forced to engage in unhealthy and potentially dangerous activities—such as cooling off in an unguarded lake or stream where drowning and bacteria exposure are more probable than a neighborhood pool.

Further clarification is needed on whether or not the administration is going to take pools away from working class families this summer. An understanding is needed as to what restrictions apply to states and municipalities wishing to use stimulus funds to maintain valuable assets related to swimming and recreation. The pool industry employs about 300,000 people nationwide. Many of these jobs could be in jeopardy if public pool facilities shut down.

### **About APSP**

The Association of Pool & Spa Professionals (APSP) is the world's largest international trade association representing the swimming pool, spa and hot tub industry. APSP's mission is promoting consumer safety and enhancing the business success of its members. Members adhere to a code of business ethics and share a commitment to public health and safety in the use of pools, spas and hot tubs. APSP member companies include manufacturers, distributors, manufacturers' agents, designers, builders, installers, retailers, and service professionals. For more information, visit [www.APSP.org](http://www.APSP.org).

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