

# Wisconsin Recreational Facilities FACT SHEET



## Acceptable Alternatives to Landline Emergency Telephones in Pool Areas

The following information is intended to provide guidance to public pool operators. The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection's (DATCP) goal is to protect and promote the health and safety of Wisconsin pool patrons by preventing injuries and accidents at public pools, and to facilitate rapid response when injuries or other emergencies occur. For many years, Wisconsin Administrative Code chapter ATCP 76 has required a landline telephone within the pool area so that emergency responders may be summoned expediently. In recent years, DATCP has allowed telephones within 25 feet of the pool enclosure to serve as pool emergency telephones. In addition, the building location and emergency telephone numbers must be posted near the phone to help direct emergency responders to the pool.

### **What has recently changed related to regulations for emergency telephones at public pools?**

With the revisions to chapter ATCP 76, effective September 24, 2023, and to section ATCP 76.26(2) in particular, certain telecommunication technologies that were allowed previously only with a variance can be used now without a variance to summon emergency services to a pool, as long as they meet certain criteria to ensure a reliable way to reach emergency dispatch. Some telecommunication devices or situations still need a variance, and some telecommunication devices or situations remain prohibited. Below are examples of allowable telecommunication technologies and devices as well as some that are prohibited for use at a pool emergency telecommunication device.

### **Landline telephones within the pool area or within 25 feet of the pool area**

These devices continue to be approved as long as they are operational.



### **Acceptable alternative telecommunication technologies and their devices**

Some alternative telecommunication technologies that needed approval through the variance process in the past are now acceptable. A device is acceptable if it meets all of the criteria listed below:

1. Capable of connecting directly to emergency dispatch or emergency medical services.
2. Has a reliable signal that can be verified by the Sanitarian.
3. Protected from weather, vandalism, and theft by a protective enclosure or equivalent.
4. Has connection to permanent power supply at or near the pool area.
5. Has a battery back-up.
6. Device is accessible to patrons for emergency use.

Below are two technologies and devices that are now allowed without a variance, as long as criteria #1-6 (listed on page 1) are met. These are (left) voice-over-internet telephones and (right) cellular emergency pool telephones.



Invil X7A Android VoIP Phone, 7-



### **Some telecommunications devices may be approved under a variance**

A push button with intercom to 911 or dispatch would need to be reviewed and could be approved. The push button device can use a landline or be any device that meets the criteria for alternative telecommunication devices (for example, voice-over-internet).

Any telecommunications device (including alternative telecommunications devices) that ring the front desk or office instead of 911 or emergency dispatch directly, and is staffed at all times when the pool is accessible to patrons (below, right), could be allowed under a variance.

*To be approved for a variance, the technology and device must also meet criteria #1-6 (listed on page 1) for acceptable alternative telecommunication technologies or devices.*

Below are examples of push button devices.



### **Some technologies and devices cannot be approved for use as pool emergency telecommunications devices**

Some examples of devices that are not approved are 'cordless' phones that require connection of the base for its detachable receiver to a charger and a 'free-standing' cell phone that does not meet all of the criteria for alternative telecommunication technologies. **Any telecommunications device that is more than 25 feet from the pool enclosures is not approved for use as the pool emergency telephone or device.**



If you have additional questions, please contact [datcpdfsrec@wisconsin.gov](mailto:datcpdfsrec@wisconsin.gov).