



To the Mayor and Members of the City Council

June 21, 2022

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SUBJECT: FEASIBILITY OF INCREASING THE NUMBER OF DAYS CITY POOLS ARE OPEN

The purpose of this Informal Report is to provide information on the feasibility of increasing the number of days that City of Fort Worth pools are open. Traditionally, industry standard for the operation duration of outdoor pools is Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day. Specific days for the 2022 season (as of June 1) are:

City	Opening	Closing	Comments
Fort Worth	May 28	September 5	Lap swim through mid-October (weather permitting) at Forest Park*
Austin	June 6	August 14	Staggered opening
Dallas	June 4	August 14	Indoor pools open year-round
El Paso	May 28	September 5	Open weekends only
Houston	May 28	August 5	Staggered opening and alternating days
San Antonio	May 21	TBD/staffing	Open weekends only
Denton	May 28	August 10	Indoor pool open year-round
Arlington	May 27	September 5	Indoor pools open year-round
YMCA	June 4	August 14	Indoor pools open year-round

*Beginning in FY2019, the normal pool season was extended for public lap swim at Forest Park Pool. This required the use of 3 lifeguards. The pool stayed open until October 16. Pools were closed in FY2020 due to COVID-19, but in FY2021, this extension ended on October 15. Aquatics staff plan to extend this season dependent on operating condition of the pool and construction schedule.

Opening sooner than Memorial Day weekend is challenging due to the following, but Aquatics staff will investigate opening additional days as future circumstances allow.

1. A pervasive national lifeguard shortage is limiting the pools cities can open and what days they can staff, and when they open and close seasons. Some cities are offering up to \$1,500 in incentive pay and are still struggling with hiring. Fort Worth raised pay twice this season (second highest pay in area), and implemented an incentive pay program.
2. Most seasonal employees are college and high school students, with conflicting end of school year dates and events. This season approximately 60% of staff are high school students. Some seasons all staff aren't on-boarded until the second week of June.
3. Onboarding of staff requires certifying of lifeguards in addition to one week of training on point of sale system, cleaning, emergency response, customer service, etc.
4. Pool temps in early May are usually still too cold for recreational swimmers. While this May was unseasonably hot, the week of opening day had lows in the 50's. The average high in May is 83°, and average low is 64°, resulting in water temps of high 60's to low 70's.
5. There are alternative aquatic facilities in the community with indoor swimming available (i.e., YMCA, Resource Connection, fitness centers, and private organizations/clubs).

Should you have any questions regarding this Informal Report please contact Park & Recreation Department Director Richard Zavala, Assistant City Manager Valerie Washington or me.

David Cooke
City Manager