Recreational Water Illness Outbreaks Involving Interactive Water Features: Creating smart guidelines for a newly emerging public health priority

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PHASE Presentation
What are Interactive Water Features?
Background

- History and emergence
  - Sprinklers on a lawn
  - Recent popularity
    - Cost savings
    - Features
- Public health concerns
  - Audience
  - Outbreaks
IWF’s versus swimming pools

**IWF’s**
- Young children in diapers
- Not always supervised
- Water is aerosolized and exposed to the ground and to equipment
- Very few specific regulations
- Unique designs
- Under separate jurisdictions

**Swimming Pools**
- Older children who can swim
- Lifeguards
- Water remains inside pool
- Well-regulated
- Standard design
- Always under same jurisdiction
Methods

- Medical/public health literature search
- Industry literature search
- PHASE internship
  - Views of Maryland DHMH
  - Site visits
    - Pool/IWF manufacturers
    - Local recreational facilities
  - Pool committee
- Interviews with subject matter experts
What is in a name?

- No standard name
  - Sprayground or Spray Ground
  - Splashpad or Splash Pad
  - Spraypark or Spray Park
  - Sprayscape
  - Interactive Water Features
Definition

- Interactive water features
- Decorative water features
- Essential elements
  - 1. free-standing apparatuses whose function is to spray water into the air
  - 2. no more than 2” of standing water
  - 3. water draining and being re-circulated
  - 4. primary purpose is for playing
Cryptosporidium

- 15% of all RWI’s
- Cannot be inactivated by chlorine alone
- Must have UV radiation
  - Industry
  - Health department
  - Recreational facilities
Surface

- Concrete
- Epoxy Resin
- Perspectives
Supervision

- No lifeguard
  - Wet jungle gym
  - Public parks
    - Pathogens being sprayed with water continuously
- Some supervision required
  - Fecal/vomiting
  - Animals
  - Signs are not enough
- Perspectives
Jurisdiction

- Department of Health
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Perspectives
Conclusion

- This was not a template for building guidelines
- Call to action for guidelines
  - Prevent outbreaks
- Discussion of key controversial issues
  - Industry perspective
  - Health department perspective
  - Recreational facility perspective
  - End user perspective
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