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Pool water test kits

Regular testing is key to keeping your pool clean and safe to swim in. And although you can hire a pool service professional to do it for you, you can easily monitor the water's status on your own with a pool test kit. Trent Rountree, field operations manager at Pool Scouts, says it's important to know the parameters of your pool "so you can keep your water sparkling, clean, and free of algae and bacteria. If you don't know the parameters in your pool water, algae can be hard to get rid of, and bacteria can grow, which can be harmful to our bodies." To find the best pool test kits, we researched a variety of products for both chlorine and saltwater pools and spas. We also spoke to pool experts Rountree and Clay Spann, SVP of merchandising at Leslie's. We evaluated six pool test kits for their test type, pool type, and the parameters tested. Credit: Amazon $82 at Amazon $86 at Wayfair $82 at Walmart Why You Should Get It This complete kit lets you test for a wide variety of chemicals as well as water hardness and alkalinity. Keep in Mind All the components could overwhelm beginners. Taylor Technology's K-2006 Complete Test Kit earned our number-one spot because of its reputation for accurate results. By using a combination of titration (reagent chemicals) and color match tests to find out the levels of chemicals present in the water, the test helps you keep your pool balanced. The test kit is comprehensive and lets you test for free chlorine (the amount of chlorine available to kill off bacteria), total chlorine, pH, acid and base demand, hardness, total alkalinity, and stabilizers. In addition to the reagent set you get a printed color chart and a waterproof guide, plus a circular water treatment chart to help you adjust the chemicals where needed. We also like that the instruction guide on the inside of the carry case is color-coded to match the colors of the reagent bottle lids for easy reference. If you're new to pool maintenance, this may not be the best pool test kit for you as it can be a bit overwhelming to use given the number of components. But, if you are already familiar with pool water chemistry and know your way around tests, this kit offers plenty of benefits. It's also compatible with the brand's app, superTREAT. Product Details: Test Type: Drops | Pool Type: Chlorine | Parameters Tested: Free chlorine, total chlorine, pH, acid and base demand, hardness, total alkalinity, stabilizers FAC: Free Available Chlorine (FAC) is the amount of chlorine in the water that is available to be sanitized and disinfected. pH: pH levels are used to determine how acidic or basic a pool's water is. Credit: Amazon $13 at Amazon $15 at Walmart Why You Should Get It The simple test kit is an extremely user-friendly way to test the pH, chlorine, and bromine levels in your pool. Keep in Mind It's one of the few pool test kits on our list that has no accompanying app. Although the U.S. Pool Supply Standard 3-Way Swimming Pool and Spa Test Kit is pretty basic and doesn't come with tons of bells and whistles, we still think it's the best one to buy if you need to test your pool or hot tub for chlorine, bromine, and pH levels on a budget. Each kit comes with two ½ ounce liquid dropper bottles and a water testing block with a color measuring chart for checking chemical levels. There is also a user guide, so you'll know exactly how to do a proper pool test. When you're ready to start, fill the test tubes with pool water and add a few drops of the solution you want to test for. Then put the cap on the test tube and gently shake it. After a few minutes, check the results to see if your pool is safe to swim in. Unlike higher-priced test kits, it doesn't offer suggestions about what you can do to adjust your pool water's chemistry. Also, this is one of the only pool test kits on this list that does not come with a smart app to download. Product Details: Test Type: Drops | Pool Type: Chlorine | Parameters Tested: pH, chlorine, bromine Credit: Amazon $265 at Amazon $218 at Walmart Why You Should Get It The built-in LCD screen and clear instructions make it easy for both beginners and experienced pool owners to use and interpret results. Keep in Mind The testing process can be more time-consuming than using strips, but the accuracy and comprehensive results are worth the extra effort for many pool owners. The LaMotte 2086 ColorQ 2X Pro 7 Digital Pool Water Test Kit is pricey compared to other options, but its features and precision make it well worth the investment. The test kit provides digital readouts for seven key water quality parameters, including free chlorine, total chlorine, bromine, pH, alkalinity, calcium hardness, and cyanuric acid. The built-in LCD screen displays the results, so you don't have to worry about color matching. It comes with a storage case and detailed instructions, making it easy to use. You can also visit the LaMotte website or download LaMotte's WaterLink Solutions app to see what the parameters should be for your pool type, manage records, store results, and build a treatment plan based on your results. Although the initial cost is high and the actual process of testing the water can be time-consuming, consumers report that this test kit provides consistent, accurate results, saving them hundreds in chemical costs. Product Details: Test Type: Digital | Pool Type: Chlorine | Parameters Tested: Free chlorine, total chlorine, bromine, pH, alkalinity, calcium hardness, and cyanuric acid Credit: Leslieâ€™s Why You Should Get It It provides accurate test results for up to 10 water parameters in just one minute, and the results can be sent directly to your phone. Keep in Mind The tester requires a $50 monthly subscription to access all its features. If you're looking for a digital pool test kit that's easy to use and has store-quality accuracy, Leslie's AccuBlue Home Digital Pool Water Tester is a reliable and convenient option. The tester is so advanced that you can bring it to the store and they'll be able to pull up your pool's exact water quality information. Plus, you can test up to 10 water parameters and get results sent to your phone in just one minute. Connect it to the brand's app to track your pool's water chemistry over time and find the right chemicals to fix any issues. The downside is that this pick requires a $50 monthly subscription and only five water testing disks are included (they're $6.99 for a pack of five). But if you have a pool, hot tub, or spa that requires frequent testing, this digital testing kit will save you time and money in the long run. Product Details: Test Type: Digital | Pool Type: Chlorine | Parameters Tested: Free chlorine, total chlorine, bromine, pH, total alkalinity, calcium hardness, cyanuric acid, metals (copper and iron), phosphates, and salt Credit: TF Test Kits Why You Should Get It The SmartStir magnetic stirring device automatically mixes samples for more accurate results. Keep in Mind The R-0870 powder (DPD powder) is sensitive to moisture and may clump if not stored properly. However, if the color remains unchanged, you can usually break up the clumps and continue using it. If you have a saltwater pool, hot tub, or aquarium, the TF-PRO SALT with SmartStir Test Kit has everything you need to ensure your water is properly maintained and balanced. It comes with a waterproof storage case, instructions, a tip sheet, and four AA batteries. The kit includes eight tests—salt, total chlorine, free chlorine, pH, calcium hardness, alkalinity, cyanuric acid, and combined chloramines. You can buy optional add-ons like borate test strips or the SLAM option, which might be helpful if you have an algae issue or other water problems. It also uses reagents from Taylor Technologies, our top pick for pool test kit brand overall. However, like any test kit, proper handling and storage are essential for accurate results. The R-0870 powder (DPD powder) is moisture-sensitive and may clump if not stored properly. If this happens, you can break up the clumps and use the powder if its color remains unchanged. Also note the powder can stain hands and clothing, so it's best to wear gloves and use the extra cylinder that comes with the kit. Product Details: Test Type: Drops | Pool Type: Salt | Parameters Tested: Salt, total chlorine, free chlorine, pH, calcium hardness, alkalinity, cyanuric acid, and combined chloramines Credit: Amazon $25 at Amazon $32 at Walmart $49 at Home Depot Why You Should Get It These strips give you highly accurate water quality results in as little as 15 seconds. Keep in Mind The strips have a limited shelf life. The AquaCheck 7-Way Count is the best option when you want almost instant water quality results. These strips go through rigorous testing against 144 different variables to ensure high accuracy. We like how simple they are to use: just dip the strip into your pool water and wait 15 seconds for the color to change. You then check it against a color chart on the bottle to know the chemical levels in your pool, plus see what the water needs for better balance. It tests for free chlorine, total chlorine/bromine, pH, alkalinity, cyanuric acid, and hardness. If you test your pool twice a week (recommended), a bottle should last for a year. Refills are available separately. You can also download the AquaCheck Connect app to cut down on guesswork. It allows you to track your pool's water chemistry, plus scan a photo of the results to receive personalized recommendations. These testing strips have a limited shelf life, so make sure to check the expiration date on the bottle before you use them. Product Details: Test Type: Strips | Pool Type: Chlorine | Parameters Tested: Free chlorine, total chlorine, bromine, pH, alkalinity, cyanuric acid, hardness. The Taylor Technology K-2006 Test Kit is the best pool test kit because it's comprehensive and comes with everything you need to get the most accurate results and figure out how to rebalance your pool's chemistry. For a cheaper option, U.S. Pool Supply Standard 3-Way Swimming Pool & Spa Test Kit is reliable, though it doesn't have a compatible app. There are many pool test kit types available such as reagent test kits, test strips, and electronic testers. "The most common is the handheld test strips. These can test up to seven different parameters and can be chlorine or bromine based," Rountree says. "They are one-use only and rely on the user matching up colors." "There are also reagent dropper test kits where the user takes a sample of pool water and then chooses the correct reagent and adds drops into the water sample. Then mixes and matches up the color to the test kit," he adds. If you don't mind paying more, digital models provide accurate results without the hassle of color matching or second-guessing whether you chose the right category. Many of the kits featured have compatible apps with added features such as the ability to consult with an expert on your results. In general, the more complex the kit, the pricier it will be. The most common types of pools and spas are chlorine, bromine, or saltwater. "Most pools can use the exact same type of water test," Spann says. "However, pools that use alternate sanitizer types, such as saltwater pools or those using biguanide, may need additional tests to make sure their water stays healthy. " "When testing your water chemistry, you will need to test for pH, alkalinity, free chlorine plus combined and total chlorine, hardness, cyanuric acid, and salt if you have a saltwater pool," Rountree says. "Other parameters such as phosphates, iron, and copper would only be tested if you had a specific issue." There are a few common factors that most kits can test for. First is chlorine. Free available chlorine is the amount of chlorine available to sanitize and disinfect. "A pool without enough free available chlorine will be susceptible to germs and algae," Spann says. "Too much FAC can cause bleaching and may irritate your skin and eyes." Total available chlorine, on the other hand, is the total of all chlorine compounds in the water. The pH tells you how acidic or basic the water is. As Spann explains, "High pH reduces chlorine efficacy and can cause scale buildup and water cloudiness, while low pH leads to rapid chlorine dissipation and can corrode pool surfaces and equipment. Unbalanced pH also causes skin and eye irritation." The pH works together with the total alkalinity—another testing factor that affects the water's ability to "control and buffer the pH against rapid changes." You'll also see calcium hardness in many test kits. "Not enough calcium leads to corrosive water that can damage the pool or spa and equipment. Too much calcium increases the likelihood of scale buildup and cloudy water," Spann says. He adds, "Cyanuric acid is often called conditioner or stabilizer; it helps prevent chlorine from breaking down under the sun's UV rays." Phosphates are another testing factor "These are a primary food source for algae," according to Spann. "Levels should be as low as possible to prevent algae growth." Pool test kits can also test for TDS (total dissolved solids) and for metals such as iron, copper, or phosphates. "Any amount of metal poses a risk for staining and should be treated immediately." Finally, if you have a saltwater pool, you should regularly test it to make sure it has the right salt level. Too much salt in a pool can cause eye and skin irritation or trigger allergies. Excess salt can also cause rusting or clogging. When it comes to accuracy, both Spann and Rountree favor in-store water tests because they are more comprehensive than at-home testing. However, Spann says that if you use a home pool test kit, a reagent test kit will offer more precise results than test strips. Electronic or digital pool testers make it easy to test your pool. They typically work with an app and give you real-time readouts so you know the state of your pool, and suggest what you need to adjust to make it safe for swimming. Some even include monthly consultations with a pool expert. "In some cases, the cost of equipment far exceeds the use for a homeowner testing their own water, but there are some affordable battery-operated handheld applications that may be more cost-effective for a homeowner," says Rountree. "Nonetheless, a digital electric tester is usually more accurate than our eyes can be with color shading on a test strip so I would say, they are worth it if you're maintaining your own pool." Pool test kits and strips each have their advantages and disadvantages. However, test kits offer a more comprehensive and accurate measurement of various chemical parameters in pool water, such as pH, chlorine, alkalinity, and calcium hardness. Unlike test strips, test kits provide quantitative results and typically offer a wider range of tests than strips—this can be particularly important if you have a saltwater pool, which requires additional testing for things like borates. Nor'Adila Hepburn is a writer who specializes in writing in-depth buying guides for Better Homes & Gardens. To find the best pool test kits she received tips from pool experts Trent Rountree, field operations manager at Pool Scouts, and Clay Spann, SVP of merchandising at Leslie's. Tabitha Britt is a writer and editor with more than 14 years of journalism experience, with particular expertise in the areas of health and wellness. To compile this list of the best pool test kits, she considered the test type, pool type, and the parameters tested for each kit. If you've ever seen a pond covered with algae and swarming with mosquitoes, you know how important it is to maintain healthy water in your swimming pool. If left unchecked, pool water can quickly turn your dream into a nightmare. In order to be sure your backyard oasis stays swimmable, you need a pool water test kit.The best pool water test kits are easy to use and produce consistently accurate results. Although there are only a few essential tests you need to perform routinely, a pool water test kit that can provide you with a more in-depth analysis of your water is a better option.Types of pool water test kitsPurchasing a pool water test kit may seem like a daunting task, but it's actually fairly easy once you know what to look for in a quality kit. For instance, there are only three types of test kits you need to consider. The best one for you will be determined by your preference. There are pros and cons to each type, but no right or wrong choices.Test stripsThese thin white strips have a number of treated squares on them. Some have just three, while others may have as many as six. Each square performs a different test, and you can see the results in seconds. You simply match the color on the chart – which is usually located on the container – and you've got a good idea of what is going on with your pool water. The downside to these strips is they can be easily contaminated. Just reaching in the container with wet hands can ruin most of the pack, so you must be careful. Also, not following the directions precisely may produce erroneous readings.Test kitsThese kits typically come with two little polyethylene containers and a number of tiny plastic bottles filled with reagents – depending on the kit, you may have two or several reagents. You use the container to take samples of the pool water. After filling the container to the proper level and adding the precise amount of drops, you swirl the water and the reagent together until you get a uniform color. Then, you match this color to the chart, which is also on the polyethylene container, and that is how you obtain your reading. The major drawback to this method is it is time consuming, especially if you need to perform more than one test. Additionally, the colors are fairly close in hue and it can sometimes be difficult to interpret your actual reading.Digital testersThe obvious upside to digital pool water testing kits is you get a reading like 7.2, so you can see exactly how much chlorine is in your water. However, you must be careful because some digital testers perform tests you don't necessarily need for pool water – many are designed for testing your drinking water. There are two main types of digital water testers. The first type allows you to simply stick probes into the water to get results, while the other models still require you to mix together the pool water and a reagent. These types of pool water test kits are at the higher end of the price range, so if budget is a concern, the other two options may make more sense.What should you test?You need to keep close tabs on the chlorine/bromine levels and your pool water's pH. Those are the essential tests you must perform regularly. There are a number of other tests that you can perform to better understand your pool water chemistry. These tests can help you save a great deal of money if you need to troubleshoot certain conditions. Not all kits offer all tests. The following are your options.● Free chlorine: This is what keeps your pool sanitized. You want to keep the level between 1 and 3 parts per million (ppm).● Total chlorine: After chlorine has done its job of sanitizing, it is still in the water, but it is essentially ineffective. This type of chlorine is called combined chlorine. Total chlorine is both the active and the non active chlorine in your pool water. When the pool starts to smell or your eyes get irritated, it usually means there is too much combined chlorine and you will need to shock it/super chlorinate it to get rid of the combined chlorine.● Bromine: This is an alternative to chlorine. It holds up better in warmer water, making it more effective for spas. You want to keep the level between 3 and 5 ppm.● pH: This number tells you how acidic your pool water is. The typical level for the human body is around 7.4. The lower the number, the higher the acidity. The pH of swimming pool water should be between 7.4 to 7.6 to provide the most comfort .● Acid demand: This test helps you determine how much acid is needed to lower the pH level of your pool water.● Base demand: This test helps you determine how much of an alkaline (base) substance is needed to raise the pH level of your pool water.● Total alkalinity: Alkalinity is related to, but not the same as, pH. It can best be thought of as the water's resistance to change, specifically to become more acidic. In swimming pool water tests, the focus is on bicarbonate alkalinity. This reading should be between 80 ppm and 120 ppm.● Calcium hardness: This test measures the amount of calcium in your pool water. When the reading is too high, the water is typically cloudy and the filters clog more frequently. When it is too low, you may notice pitting and dissolving of concrete, plaster, and grout. The ideal range is 200 to 400 ppm in pools and 150 to 250 ppm in spas.● Cyanuric acid: Cyanuric acid helps the chemicals in your pool water work more effectively, thus saving you money. The lower the cyanuric acid, the more chlorine you will use. Aim for 50 ppm.● Total dissolved solids: This test measures everything that is dissolved in your pool water. Drinking water can only have 500 ppm according to EPA Water Standards. Pool water is best if kept below 1,500 ppm. It is possible to maintain much higher levels if the water is properly balanced, but this lower level is best for combating salty water, stains, cloudy water, and scaling (buildup).● Salt: If you have a saltwater pool, you'll want to keep the salt level to the manufacturer's recommended range. This test will help you do that.● Temperature: Most pool water test kits do not come with a thermometer, but water temperature is actually a crucial factor in determining how to balance your pool water. It is important to purchase a pool thermometer if you want to perform certain calculations.CautionTesting chemicals may expire quickly when left in the sun. Always store your pool water testing kits in a cool, dry area that is located out of the sun.STAFFBestReviewsThe cost of testing kits for your home swimming pool and spa may vary greatly depending on which type of kit you purchase.InexpensiveA canister of 50 test strips that you dip into the water to get an instant reading of chlorine and pH will cost between $8 and $10. From $12 to $15, you will find more comprehensive test strips and some basic digital testers with limited functions.Mid-rangeIn the $15 to $20 range is where you'll find test kits that come in a case and require you to mix reagents with pool water to perform basic tests. In this range, you will also find 100 count strips that provide a comprehensive snapshot of your pool water chemistry. Better digital testers are located in the $20 to $30 price range, while kits that contain enough reagents for an entire season can cost between $30 and $60.ExpensiveUsually, pool water test kits that cost over $100 will be more than you need for a home pool. However, if budget isn't a concern, you use your pool a lot and find that results from your tests change quickly, that may be what you prefer.Pool water testing tipsNo matter which pool water test kit you purchase, its accuracy can be diminished by contamination or improper usage. Here are some tips for getting the best results from your pool water testing kit.● Be regular: It is recommended that you check your pool water a minimum of two times per week. Do not do any less. Daily tests are better to catch any problems early. By comparison, commercial pools should be tested every hour.● Mornings are best: If you want the best representation of how your pool is functioning, test your water in the morning after your pool has had a chance to recover from the previous day.● Understand your limits: Consult your test kit to learn what the proper levels should be.● Both ends: If you have a deep and a shallow end, be sure to test both to make sure the readings are acceptable at each end.● Expiration dates: Yes, your pool water test kit has an expiration date. Check to make sure your kit is still good, especially at the start of swimming season if you haven't used it in a while.● Follow all directions: If you do not follow the directions, you will not get accurate readings.● Test first: Test before adding additional chemicals.● Be patient: Some chemicals may take up to 24 hours to deliver their full effect. Testing too soon after adding chemicals may give you false readings and cause you to add more chemicals than you need.● White background: When matching colors, it is best to compare them against a white background.● Check your results: Many pool service stores offer free in-store water testing. To make sure you are getting accurate readings from your home pool water test kit, take advantage of this service."To ensure the best performance, start each season with a new test kit."STAFFBestReviewsQ. What is the difference between chlorine and bromine?A. Chlorine and bromine both work to sanitize your water by killing bacteria and other harmful contaminants. The main differences are that bromine is more beneficial to individuals with sensitive skin and it is more stable at warmer temperatures than chlorine. Because of this, bromine is often the better choice to treat spa water. Testing kits typically test for both chlorine and bromine, but always check the label to be sure as some may require additional calculations.Q. Do I need a different type of test kit for a saltwater pool?A. A saltwater pool still uses chlorine to sanitize the water, the only difference is a saltwater chlorine generator (SWG) converts the salt to chlorine via electricity. All the regular pool water test kits will work fine as the numbers are the same no matter which type of pool you have. However, it is important to adjust the salt level to the manufacturer's recommended range. In order to measure that, you will need a kit or separate strips that can test your pool water for sodium chloride content.Q. Which is better, test strips or kits with liquid reagents?A. There is always going to be a debate over which method of testing is better. Mostly, it comes down to contamination, following the directions, and personal preference. Test strips are extremely convenient, offering everything you need in a matter of seconds. Because of this, you will more likely perform regular testing with strips. However, individuals who work around pools daily will often point out that the extra time it takes to perform the individual drop tests is worth it for the increased accuracy. The best method is to test more frequently with strips, but also perform backup tests with a kit a minimum of two times a week to be sure both readings are in alignment. Digital pool water testing kits and monitors offer the ability of testing your pool water from the convenience of your home. Today's digital pool water testing kits and monitors offer pool owners unparalleled convenience by allowing them to test their water quality directly at home, eliminating the need to take a sample into their local pool store. With traditional testing methods, pool owners had to collect a water sample, transport it to the store, and wait for the results, often experiencing delays and inconvenience. However, digital testing devices have revolutionized this process, enabling pool owners to obtain accurate and immediate results without ever leaving their home.These devices are designed to be user-friendly, with straightforward instructions and intuitive interfaces that make water testing quick and effortless. Pool owners can simply dip a test strip or sensor into their pool water, input the data into the device, and receive precise readings within seconds. This streamlined process not only saves time but also provides the convenience of testing whenever it's most convenient, whether it's early morning, late at night, or on weekends.Furthermore, digital testing devices offer comprehensive testing capabilities, allowing pool owners to assess multiple parameters such as pH, chlorine levels, alkalinity, and more in a single test. This comprehensive analysis provides a holistic view of the pool's water quality, empowering pool owners to make informed decisions about maintenance and chemical adjustments.The Sutro Smart Water Monitor simplifies pool and spa maintenance, eliminating the need for water samples, test strips, or messy kits. Just drop the monitor into your pool and use your phone to get real-time readings and advice for balancing water chemistry. The Sutro device offers a simple, safe, and seamless way to measure, monitor, and receive treatment recommendations via the Sutro App, ensuring your water remains safe, clean, and swim-ready. This comprehensive system includes a floating Sutro Monitor, a water test cartridge that measures pH, free chlorine (and bromine for spas), alkalinity, rechargeable Li-Ion batteries, a hub and charger base unit to extend range, and a US-110V adapter. Compatible with chlorine, saltwater, bromine, mineral, ozone, and UV pools and hot tubs, the Sutro provides peace of mind with three accurate chemical readings sent to your phone daily, even when you're away. Save time and effortlessly maintain a perfectly balanced pool or spa with the Sutro Smart Water Monitor.Your Smart Pool Solution – The Water Guru Sense 2 smart pool monitor ensures perfect pool balance and saves you money on energy bills and over-treating. Experience worry-free pool care with Water Guru Sense 2, delivering real-time monitoring directly to your hand, eliminating the need for manual water testing. Easily monitor your pool with this digital tester, which features a patented optical sensor, a laminated-glass strip, and an integrated flow sensor, revealing the unseen truth of your pool's water quality. This smart device simplifies pool care by providing precise readings, ensuring your pool remains pristine, clear, and balanced for enjoyment by family, friends, and pets. Beyond just testing, the Water Guru Sense 2 offers expert advice based on accurate data of your pool's chemical composition, size, and type. The comprehensive WaterGuru SENSE S2 system includes the SENSE S2 C5 Cassette, four "C" batteries, a float ring for spas and above-ground pools, and a quick start guide, giving you everything needed for optimal pool monitoring.Leslie's AccuBlue Home offers pool owners a comprehensive solution for maintaining a clean, safe, and beautiful pool environment right from the comfort of their own homes. Drawing from Leslie's renowned in-store AccuBlue water testing and consultation expertise, AccuBlue Home brings industry-leading technology and decades of experience into a sleek and modern device that seamlessly pairs with the Leslie's app on your smartphone. With results displayed in just 60 seconds, AccuBlue Home provides the quickest and most reliable at-home water testing solution for pools and spas utilizing chlorine, salt, or bromine as their primary sanitizer. This device enables pool owners to monitor up to 10 vital water chemistry parameters, including Free Chlorine, Total Chlorine, pH, Total Alkalinity, Calcium Hardness, Cyanuric Acid, Iron, Copper, Phosphates, and Salt, ensuring optimal pool health and safety. Transform your pool maintenance routine with AccuBlue Home for just $50 a month. With a FREE device included and a $50 monthly credit, you have the flexibility to purchase chemicals, supplies, and floats both in-app, in-store, and online. Ensure your pool stays clean, safe, and beautiful with ease. Plus, your membership is entirely flexible – pause or cancel anytime to suit your needs. Dive into hassle-free pool care today with AccuBlue Home.Trusted by pool and hot tub owners across the United States, PoolWaterLAB offers accurate, user-friendly, and smart water testing solutions, making traditional test strips and frequent trips to the pool shop a thing of the past. PoolWaterLAB enables you to achieve professional-level accuracy at home with its comprehensive 27-parameter testing for pools and hot tubs, ensuring crystal clear, safe, and perfectly balanced water. The kit includes tests for key water parameters such as pH, chlorine, alkalinity, hardness, and phosphates. Featuring a user-friendly app and software with Bluetooth and Wi-Fi capabilities, the digital pool water tester allows you to track, analyze, and manage water quality data from anywhere. The PoolWaterLAB testing kit is IP68 waterproof rated and compatible with both solid and liquid reagents, providing versatile and convenient water testing for home use and professionals. Additionally, the PoolWaterLAB app offers chemical dosage recommendations tailored to your pool's specific chemistry, accessed through an improved web manual via a QR code on the tester box. Embrace the future of pool care with PoolWaterLAB for accurate, at-home water testing.Gain valuable insights into your pool or spa with the iopool Smart Water Monitor, allowing you to consult the state of your water anytime and receive alerts for any anomalies. The iopool app offers comprehensive product inventory management, data history, real-time analysis, and precise treatment recommendations. When starting a treatment, the app provides detailed, step-by-step instructions for optimal efficiency and safety, offering professional advice to help you manage your pool like an expert. Compatible with Chlorine, Bromine, and Active Oxygen (not compatible with salt water), iopool delivers real-time analysis and precise treatment recommendations to maintain safe and clear water continuously. The guided pool care feature ensures you follow the necessary steps for maintenance, with personalized alerts for required actions. The iopool app also lets you track the evolution of your water quality over time and share access with others, such as your pool professional while you're on vacation. The Eco Start pack includes an EcO probe, Bluetooth Wi-Fi Gateway, and lifetime access to the complete app. It's essential to keep the EcO probe submerged, as prolonged air exposure can damage the sensors. Note that the system is incompatible with salt-treated pools or spas; for these, consider the EcO Start Salt + connect. Ensure proper storage of the EcO probe when water temperatures drop below 15 degrees Celsius, as per the app's instructions. With iopool, maintain professional-level pool care with ease and confidence.The Crystal Smart Water Monitor revolutionizes pool and hot tub care by actively monitoring water quality 1,000 times per week, providing personalized chemical recommendations that far surpass the reliability of single point-in-time samples or test strip readings. Its operation is straightforward: monitor, notify, adjust. Through its app, available for both Android and iOS, the Crystal Water Monitor sends automatic notifications when chemical adjustments are needed and offers precise dosing recommendations customized for your pool or hot tub. By scanning your chemical's barcode once, the app tailors its dosing suggestions to your preferred chemical brand, supporting all major brands and working with both chlorine and bromine water types. Additionally, a saltwater version is available. The Crystal Smart Water Monitor stands out from competitors by continuously sampling water 144 times a day, ensuring the most accurate readings and recommendations without requiring expensive monthly replacement cartridges. It offers the flexibility to use any chemical brand, eliminating the need for proprietary brands. This device simplifies the water maintenance process, allowing users to abandon confusing and inaccurate test strips and avoid the hassle of taking individual samples to pool stores.Benefitting customers who prefer digital readings over color interpretation, the AquaChek TruTest offers the accuracy of AquaChek test strips with the convenience of digital technology. Utilizing medical industry technology, these test strips boast comparable accuracy to liquid tests, eliminating the need for measuring and counting drops of reagent, thereby reducing the margin for error.Featuring an easy-to-read LCD screen, the TruTest presents numerical results in just 15 seconds, sparing users the hassle of interpreting colors. Simply dip the test strip, remove it, and insert it into the reader to obtain accurate digital results. To ensure optimal water quality, it's recommended to test water at least twice a week.The digital results displayed indicate 'low', 'ok', or 'high' indicators for each of the four test parameters, offering clear guidance on necessary adjustments. Designed to simplify the testing process, this innovative device provides quick and accurate results for Free Chlorine, Free Bromine, pH, and Total Alkalinity. With the included 25 TruTest Strips, achieving pristine water quality has never been easier.The LaMotte 2056 ColorQ Pro 7 Digital Pool Water Test Kit is a versatile and reliable tool designed specifically for pool owners to easily and accurately monitor their pool water quality. This digital test kit offers an all-in-one solution for testing seven key parameters essential for maintaining balanced pool water: Free Chlorine, Total Chlorine, Bromine, pH, Alkalinity, Calcium Hardness, and Cyanuric Acid. An innovative design replaces traditional color-matching methods with a digital meter, eliminating the subjectivity and guesswork often associated with manual testing kits. Pool owners can simply dip the ColorQ Pro 7's reagent strip into a water sample, insert it into the meter, and receive precise digital readings within seconds.What makes the LaMotte 2056 ColorQ Pro 7 Digital Pool Water Test Kit stand out is its convenience, accuracy, and efficiency. Pool owners can easily perform comprehensive water tests without the need for multiple test kits or complicated procedures. The digital display provides clear and easy-to-read results, ensuring accurate measurements every time. Additionally, the ColorQ Pro 7 is designed for durability and longevity, with a rugged construction that can withstand the rigors of regular pool maintenance. With its user-friendly interface and reliable performance, the LaMotte 2056 ColorQ Pro 7 Digital Pool Water Test Kit is an essential tool for pool owners looking to maintain clean, balanced, and safe swimming conditions in their pools.The Lovibond MD 100 Pool Photometer is a device designed for accurate water testing in swimming pools, spas, and other water bodies. It's specifically engineered to measure various parameters crucial for maintaining water quality, such as chlorine, pH, alkalinity, and cyanuric acid levels.The device utilizes photometric analysis, where it measures the intensity of light transmitted through a water sample containing a reagent. The intensity of light absorbed by the reagent provides a quantitative measurement of the target parameter concentration in the water sample.With its digital display and easy-to-use interface, the AquaPRO Photometer offers quick and precise results, enabling pool operators and technicians to efficiently monitor and adjust water chemistry to ensure safe and enjoyable swimming conditions. Additionally, it often comes with a range of reagent tests and accessories tailored for comprehensive water analysis.The LaMotte 3581 Mobile WaterLink Spin Touch Lab is a cutting-edge digital water testing device tailored for pool and spa professionals, renowned for its precision, ease of use, and comprehensive testing capabilities. It can analyze up to 10 parameters from a single water sample, including pH, free chlorine, total chlorine, bromine, total alkalinity, calcium hardness, cyanuric acid, copper, iron, and salt, delivering results in just 60 seconds. This speed is crucial for professionals managing multiple pools daily, allowing for rapid diagnostics and interventions. The device employs pre-filled reagent disks to minimize human error and ensure consistent, accurate results. Its user-friendly touchscreen interface, combined with a robust, portable design, makes it ideal for field use. Additionally, the WaterLink Spin Touch Lab includes software for data logging, reporting, and sharing, enabling professionals to track historical data, observe trends, and provide detailed reports to clients. This enhances service quality and builds client trust by offering precise, reliable, and quick water quality assessments. The device's versatility, comprehensive testing, and efficient reporting capabilities significantly boost productivity, making it an indispensable tool for maintaining high standards in pool maintenance and client satisfaction.Digital water testing devices for pools are generally quite accurate, but their accuracy can vary depending on the brand, model, and maintenance of the device. Here are a few factors influencing their accuracy:Calibration: Regular calibration is crucial for maintaining the accuracy of digital testers. Some models come with automatic calibration features. Sensor Quality: Higher quality sensors provide more accurate readings. Maintenance: Keeping the device clean and properly stored affects its accuracy. Interference: Presence of contaminants or incorrect sample collection can affect readings.Ease of Use: Digital testers are often easier to use. They typically involve submerging the device in water and getting a direct reading, which reduces human error. Precision: Digital devices can provide more precise readings compared to color comparison in standard kits. Speed: Results from digital testers are usually available much faster. Data Logging: Some digital devices offer data logging capabilities, making it easier to track water quality over time.Accuracy and Precision: They generally provide more precise measurements. Ease of Use: Simple to operate, often with a single-button interface. Speed: Immediate results without the need for manual color matching. Data Management: Ability to store and track data over time. Multi-Parameter Testing: Many digital devices can test multiple parameters simultaneously (pH, chlorine, alkalinity, etc.).Cost: Digital testers are typically more expensive than standard kits. Maintenance: Require regular calibration and maintenance to ensure accuracy. Battery Dependence: Need batteries or charging, which can be inconvenient. Durability: Can be more fragile compared to standard kits. Calibration: Incorrect calibration can lead to inaccurate readings. pool monitorspool waterpool water testingtesting kitswater testing The company partners with the US EPA to determine if bromate forms from Sodium Bromide use Piru CA, May 5th, 2025 – United Chemical, a well-known manufacturer in the pool industry, has begun a study for the US EPA regarding potential bromate formation from sodium bromide use in outdoor pools. United Chemical has constructed eight (8) above-ground test pools at its facility, which will test for bromate under several common use cases for sodium bromide over the coming summer.In 2021, the US EPA made an interim decision regarding using bromine-containing compounds in outdoor pools due to the potential for bromate to form as a byproduct. The decision was made to add the statement "Not for use in outdoor pools" to all registered bromine sanitizers. Algaecides containing sodium bromide were also included in the decision. The agency cited a lack of data on whether bromate would form under typical outdoor pool use as the rationale behind the decision. Bromate is classified as a probable human carcinogen based on studies of bromate ingestion in mice that led to renal tumors. The required label changes will appear across the industry later this year."While there's indirect evidence to suggest that bromate is unlikely to form in swimming pools, it was important to test that hypothesis – both to provide the agency and industry with data it lacked, as well as for our own peace of mind," says Scott Hamilton, CEO of United Chemical and son of founder Jock Hamilton. "My father introduced sodium bromide to the industry through Yellow Treat in the early 1980s. Although we feel confident based on existing evidence that bromate doesn't form from sodium bromide under typical use in outdoor pools, we felt it was our responsibility to invest in performing the study." United Chemical invested over $50,000 to construct the outdoor pools and provide on-site testing equipment to log sample data. Samples under various conditions will be sent to Eurofin, a highly respected laboratory well-regarded by the US EPA. Eurofin will use ion chromatography, considered the gold standard for bromate detection, to test for bromate concentrations. The testing is estimated to cost over $20,000 for the study."While most people know us through our algaecides like Yellow Treat® and No Mor Problems®, we consider ourselves a science company first. My dad built the company on teaching chemistry to the industry. That's why we will publish all the raw data we collect to the industry. It's important that this study is as transparent and rigorous as possible," says Scott. "It's our scientific and ethical duty."About United ChemicalUnited Chemical was founded in 1971 by Jock Hamilton and makes specialty pool products. They're most well-known for their line of algaecides that utilize sodium bromide. Jock Hamilton was widely recognized as an expert in water chemistry in the industry, including creating the Hamilton Index which was the first index made explicitly for pools. Many of his insights significantly influenced the balancing recommendations of the pool industry. He passed away in 2002.You can read more about the EPA decisions and United Chemical's study on their website here: more information, please contact Scott Hamilton at (805)521-1011 or From Poolside Romance To Business Expansion: New Pinch A Penny Franchise Owners Open First Store In North Carolina RALEIGH, NC (April 29, 2025) – Pinch A Penny opened its first location in Raleigh, North Carolina this past Friday, marking its continued strategic expansion throughout the Sun Belt region. Raleigh locals Aaron and Shawnta Askins are partnering with Pinch A Penny to own and operate the new store, harnessing their shared industry experience, deep community roots and exceptional customer service to bring premium pool service and products to the Triangle area. Since starting with one family-owned location in Clearwater, FL, Pinch A Penny has grown exponentially across the southeastern U.S., and continues to do so by franchising with locals to own and operate every location and offer unrivaled customer service and premium products. With owners on site daily, Pinch A Penny customers across the country are provided expert, personalized advice, allowing them to select the best products and services for their pools' needs. All Pinch A Penny locations offer custom pool service plans, free water testing, equipment installation and repair, as well as high-quality products including specialty chemicals, automatic pool cleaners, pumps, heaters, chillers and more.Now, as the brand surpasses 300 locations and celebrates 50 years in business, the company will begin developing its presence in the Carolinas."Pinch A Penny has always been committed to choosing franchise partners who reflect our values and care deeply about their communities," said Jim Eisch, President and CEO of Pinch A Penny. "Aaron and Shawnta's story is a powerful example of purpose and partnership, and we are proud to partner with them as we expand to Raleigh." The Askins bring a blend of industry and customer care expertise. Aaron spent more than 16 years working with POOLCORP, the world's largest swimming pool distributor and the organization's parent company, providing him experience in water filtration, softeners and home exteriors. Shawnta brings more than a decade of experience in interior design, community ministry and leadership, along with the care and insight of being a full-time mom. Their journey together began when they met while working at a pool service store, and their shared history in the industry, paired with a vision for family-run entrepreneurship, now comes full circle with their very own Pinch A Penny location."We've been in the brand family for 16 years, and, with the family-owned-and-operated aspect of Pinch A Penny, we knew we were ready to build something of our own with them," said Shawnta Askins, co-owner of the Raleigh, NC location. "Owning our own Pinch A Penny store allows our family to work together, pour into our community and provide our neighbors with trustworthy service rooted in real, personable relationships."The Raleigh store offers Pinch A Penny's full suite of services, including free water testing, equipment installation and repair, pool renovation and outdoor living design, as well as a wide selection of chemicals, pool supplies and outdoor products to supply Raleigh with pool and patio essentials. After spending 20 years in Raleigh and building deep connections in the area, the Askins know the needs of the region well and look to actively support local schools and causes close to their hearts through their partnership with Pinch A Penny.With a focus on community, the Raleigh team hopes to build long-term relationships with customers rooted in effective communication, education and scalable service to find the right solutions for each lifestyle."Our goal is to serve our customers the way we'd want to be served," said Aaron Askins, co-owner of the Raleigh Pinch A Penny. "That means listening to needs, providing honest expertise and making