

FACT SHEET 11

COVERS & BLANKETS

An effective pool cover saves water, reduces heat loss and keeps leaves and debris out.

A pool or spa cover performs a multitude of tasks, the most obvious being keeping evaporation to a minimum. Covers and blankets also keep out dirt and dust, airborne microorganisms and even the sunlight that promotes algal growth. Some covers also help warm the pool and keep it warm.

SAVING WATER

All covers will significantly reduce evaporation and are highly recommended for this purpose.

KEEPING IT CLEAN

In winter, high winds blow debris into the pool and in autumn leaves from overhanging trees can fall into an uncovered pool. Almost all covers and blankets will help keep this material out of the pool. Mesh covers are specifically designed for this purpose. They allow rainwater to pass through while trapping leaves and other debris. The mesh is lightweight, strong and held in place by anchor ropes.

BUBBLE BLANKETS

The most common pool covers are blankets of minute transparent bubbles that are designed to trap sunlight and warm the pool. At night, a floating bubble blanket also reduces evaporation, thereby reducing heat loss and chemical consumption. As bubble blankets are regularly moved on and off the pool, a roller is very useful. And once on the roller, the blanket's solar efficiency is so great they need to be covered when in the sun to stop them from overheating.

THERMAL BLANKETS

Thermal blankets are designed to insulate the pool overnight by reducing evaporation and convection heat loss. They can cut down on pool heating time and hence costs by reducing the time it takes to reheat a pool in the morning.

Less evaporation also saves water and chemical consumption. It can also reduce condensation on indoor pools. Thermal blankets are not as thick as a bubble blanket, but a roller is still essential.

SLAT COVERS

The latest covers are made up of slats that roll out on to the pool surface, similar to a horizontal garage roller door. When fully extended across the pool the slats lock together to form a barrier that can support the weight of a small child or pet.

Another variation achieves much the same result using a sturdy material supported by metal rods at regular intervals. Being thermal insulators, both these options also operate like a thermal blanket in that they reduce overnight heat loss and evaporation.

Slatted covers are usually installed during construction. They are built into an underground pit at one end of the pool and appear and disappear through a slot the full width of the pool. They can also be retrofitted to existing pools.

Remember: covers and blankets are not a substitute for a safety barrier or proper supervision.