Dear PHTCC Member,

Below is a template for you to use when contacting your Federal, Provincial or Municipal representatives. We recommend **reaching the government representative of the Jurisdiction in which your company is located** – For this list and a copy of the below letter template, please go to the PHTCC’s dedicated COVID-19 website at: <https://www.phtcccovid19.ca/> and click on your Provinces icon. These efforts by members, in support of the National offices outreach to them previously, will ensure all government officials are aware of the health and safety and potential economic impact on their jurisdictions. Please contact: office@poolcouncil.ca if you have any questions about this template.

April, 2020 [DATE]

Representative [Provincial/Municipal Member of Parliament – Honourable then Name]

Official Office Address/Parliamentary Office [of Your Legislator]

 [Street Address], [Suite, Room/Office Number- if available]

 [City, Province, Postal Code]

Submitted via email to: [Provide **your email address** on this line if submitted via email]

**RE: COVID-19 ESSENTIAL BUSINESSES AND SERVICES: POOLS AND HOT TUBS**

Dear, [Member of Parliament/Government Representative]:

My name is [Your Name] and I work with/at [Your Company]. We provide [The Services your company provides: Operations/Maintenance, Retail, etc.] We employ [Number of Jobs] in your jurisdiction and service [Approx. number of Pool/Spa Customers] customers as a valuable part of the local economy. Our company is a member of the Pool & Hot Tub Council of Canada (PHTCC), Canada’s oldest and largest association representing swimming pool, spa, and hot tub manufacturers, builders, designers, distributors, suppliers, installers, retailers, and service technicians. They are working with members like myself to ensure our industry may remain open during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As information about COVID-19 continues to be updated and disseminated daily by the federal, provincial and local governments, there is an ongoing effort to clarify which businesses are deemed essential vs. non-essential. Those deemed as essential can continue to operate as quarantines and restrictions are put in place and all non-essential are to close and suspend operations.

PHTCC and its members firmly believe the companies that supply pool sanitization and disinfection materials (through manufacturing, distribution or retail stores), the companies that manage the maintenance of swimming pools, hot tubs and other artificial bodies of water are essential to preventing the transmission of infectious diseases, helping maintain community health, and ensuring public safety. A couple of key bulletins from health agencies state:

* **U.S. Center for Disease Control and Prevention** has stated there is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools and hot tubs and have stated that: “Proper operation, maintenance and disinfection (e.g., with chlorine and bromine) of pools and hot tubs should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19.”1 Additionally, the **World Health Organization** states that controlling water quality is necessary to prevent the transmission of infectious diseases. Proper circulation maintenance and chemical treatment mitigate the growth of pathogens and mosquito breeding grounds.
* The **Public Health Agency of Canada** guidance on industries that qualify as essential workforce provides multiple provisions that are applicable to the pool and spa industry2:
* Does your workplace/business provide essential services? “Essential services include critical infrastructure, power, water purification, health care, correctional services, law enforcement, etc. Absenteeism at these workplaces can lead to significant societal disruption; therefore, prevention and business continuity planning are critical.
* Is the majority of the work/service carried out indoors, outdoors or both? “Work/services offered outdoors (i.e. higher ventilation) are likely to be considered lower risk than those held indoors (e.g. Construction work vs administrative work in an office).

Without proper pool and hot tub maintenance (which includes circulation and treatment of water) various pathogens can grow, such as Pseudomonas, Cryptosporidium, E. Coli, Shigella, etc. It can also create a breeding ground for mosquitoes, other pests and the diseases (West Nile Virus) they may carry, which presents a risk not only to bathers but to the entire community at large.

As families across the country are being asked to eliminate outside contact and shelter at home and with gyms and other public facilities now closed, the backyard pool, spa or hot tub provides an important way for families to focus on their health and well-being. As the weather warms, these pools and hot tubs need to be properly maintained to ensure proper sanitation measures are taking place.

I am writing to you today to ask that pool service providers and retailers be classified as essential to ensure the prevention of infectious disease growth and transmission of disease through otherwise un-sanitized and non-operable pools.

Thank you for your dedication to your jurisdiction during this difficult time. I encourage you to visit the Pool & Hot Tub Council of Canada’s dedicated COVID-19 website at: <https://www.phtcccovid19.ca/>

Sincerely,

[Your Name]

[Your Title]

[Your Company]

[Your Email]

[Your Phone Number]

Member of the Pool & Hot Tub Council of Canada

1 CDC Bulletin at: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/php/water.html>

2 Government of Canada, Health: Risk-informed decision-making guidelines for workplaces and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/guidance-documents/risk-informed-decision-making-workplaces-businesses-covid-19-pandemic.html>