



Is the pool operating under reduced hours this year?

Yes. The Sedona Community Pool will scale back to weekend hours after Aug. 18 because of a shortage of lifeguards.

Lifeguard positions are seasonal and part-time, and are typically popular jobs for school-aged teens on summer break. Most years, after school goes back in session, the city can stagger shifts to maintain enough lifeguards for safety, which allows for extended operation hours until October. That's not the case this year.

Why can't the city hire more lifeguards?

The city has recruited extensively for lifeguards. The positions are continuously promoted on the city website, and the city has placed advertising in the Red Rock News, Kudos Camp Verde, Kudos Cottonwood and the Verde Independent newspapers, including paying for expanded ad displays to draw more attention. Digital ads were placed on Indeed, Facebook and Twitter, and fliers were posted at the pool, Snap Fitness Sedona, Cottonwood Recreation Center and Sedona Fit.

Other outreach methods included distributions to Yavapai College, homeschool parents, job fairs for students and working-age adults, and individual swimmers. While outreach has generated some interest, it has not been enough to hire and staff weekday hours.

I've heard some people are interested but the city won't hire them.

Some working-age adults have inquired but many cannot work at the hours or seasons they're needed, need too much time away for traveling or have other restrictions. To keep the pool open during the week, the city must have enough lifeguards sufficient to cover every shift, every day, as well as having people in reserve to cover unforeseen absences.

Can the city increase pay to attract more people?

City lifeguards earn between \$11.25 and \$13 per hour, a higher wage than surrounding areas. A comparison of 26 other pools in Arizona shows that the city of Sedona wage is among the highest offered statewide. The city may explore the idea of increasing lifeguard wages but operating the pool is already expensive. Most of the cost is for payroll.

Increasing the wage would increase operating costs, which could then limit the city's ability to maintain a longer swim season. And there is no guarantee that increasing wages would increase staffing. The lifeguard position will always be part-time and seasonal, and therefore unlikely to attract individuals who need longevity and job security. Those who don't need longevity and security typically have other commitments, restrictions and need for more time off.

What is the cost to operate the pool?

Total pool operations costs for fiscal year 2020 (July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020) are projected to be \$421,870. Of this, an estimated \$56,700 is paid by users. The remaining \$365,170 is subsidized by taxpayers. Based on projected attendance of 11,400 this fiscal year, the total city/taxpayer subsidy to operate the pool is \$32 per person per visit.

Is the city committed to continued operation of the pool?

Yes. The city assumed pool operations from the school district many years ago because the district could not afford to operate the facility. The city has continued to invest in the pool even though the city does not own it, and has expanded both hours and programs. Under city management, days of operation expanded from 183 in 2017 to a projected 231 days in 2019. The city's total investment in the pool has increased from a budgeted \$278,940 in FY2018 to a projected \$421,870 in FY20. That is a 51 percent increase in just three years.

How does the Sedona Community Pool compare to other outdoor public pools in terms of operating hours and season?

The city's research indicates that the vast majority of outdoor, public pools are open for the summer only, from Memorial Day until mid-to-late August or very early September. In the past 10 years, the city has opened Sedona's pool as early as March and maintained swim opportunities as late as November; in five of the last 10 years, the city has opened the pool prior to Memorial Day. This year is the first in 12 years that operations will be scaled back in August because there are not enough lifeguards to ensure pool safety.

2019 POOL HOURS

Now through Aug. 18

Sat. through Thursday (Closed Fridays)
8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Aug. 19 through Oct. 27

Sat & Sun
8:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Pool closes for the season

Oct. 28, 2019

This document updated Aug. 5, 2019