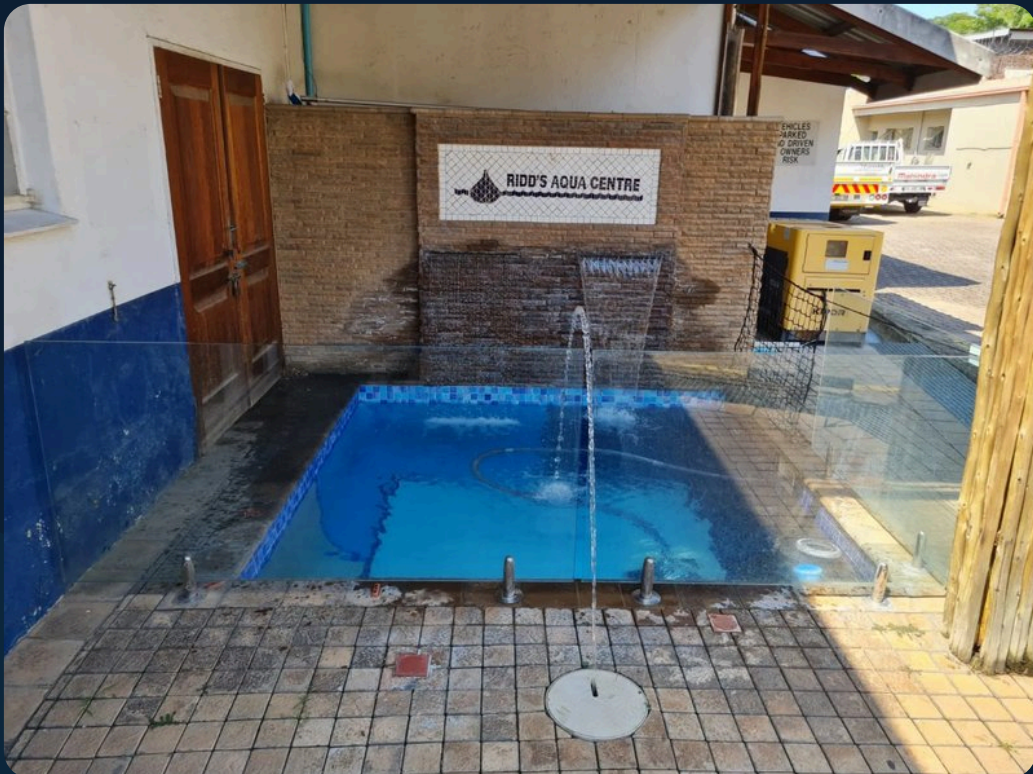




THE POOL OWNER'S GUIDE TO

# Crystal Clear Water

Everything you need to know about maintaining your pool,  
from water chemistry to equipment care.



FREE WATER TESTING AT BOTH BRANCHES

# Your Pool Care Roadmap

This guide gives you the same advice our team shares with pool owners every day at the counter. Whether you maintain your own pool or want to understand what your pool service should be doing, you'll find practical, tested information inside.

Ridd's Aqua Centre has been helping pool owners across Gauteng and Mpumalanga keep their water crystal clear. We stock everything from HTH chemicals to Kreepy Krauly parts, and our team tests your water for free at both branches.



- 01 The 5 Numbers That Matter** Water chemistry fundamentals
- 02 How to Test Your Pool Water** Lab testing vs home kits
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**20 min/week**

is all it takes

**Free Testing**

at both branches

**Two Branches**

Roodepoort & Nelspruit

**We test your pool water for free.** Bring a sample to either branch. No appointment needed.

# The 5 Numbers That Matter

Pool water chemistry is not complicated once you know the five key parameters. Test these regularly and adjust in the order shown below.

## pH Level

Ideal: 7.2 -- 7.6



Acidic < 6.8

8.0+ > Basic

Most important. Affects everything else.

## Free Chlorine

Ideal: 1 -- 3 ppm



Too low < 0.5

5+ > Irritation

Your primary sanitiser. Kills bacteria and algae.

## Total Alkalinity

Ideal: 80 -- 120 ppm



Unstable < 60

150+ > Cloudy

Buffers pH. Adjust this before pH.

## Cyanuric Acid (CYA)

Ideal: 30 -- 50 ppm



No protection < 10

80+ > Chlorine lock

Sunscreen for chlorine. Too much blocks it.

## Calcium Hardness

Ideal: 200 -- 400 ppm



Corrosive < 150

500+ > Scale

Protects plaster and equipment.

1. Alkalinity



2. pH



3. Chlorine

Then CYA if needed > Then calcium last

# How to Test Your Pool Water

Testing is the foundation. You can't fix what you can't measure.

## Testing Tips

- Test at least once a week in summer, fortnightly in winter.
- Test in the morning before the sun burns off chlorine.
- Don't test within 24 hours of adding chemicals.
- Keep test strips dry and sealed. Replace every season.
- Home kits measure basics. Lab tests catch hidden issues.

## Collecting a Sample

- 1 Use a clean, dry plastic bottle.
- 2 Collect water elbow-deep, away from return jets.
- 3 Turn the bottle upside down, push it under, flip at depth.
- 4 Cap it tightly and bring it in within 2 hours.
- 5 Label it with your name and phone number.



### What We Test That Home Kits Can't

- Total dissolved solids
- Copper & iron levels
- Phosphates
- Salt concentration
- Stabiliser accuracy

Professional-grade lab analysis. Free.

## Testing Frequency Guide

Parameter	Home Test	Lab Test
pH & Chlorine	Weekly	Monthly
Alkalinity	Fortnightly	Monthly
CYA / Stabiliser	Monthly	Seasonal
Calcium / TDS	N/A (lab only)	Quarterly
Metals (Cu, Fe)	N/A (lab only)	If staining

**FREE water testing at both branches. No appointment needed.**

# Weekly Pool Care Routine

Spend 20 minutes a week on these tasks and your pool stays clear year-round. Skip them for two weeks and you could be looking at a lengthy recovery.



- Skim the surface**  
Remove leaves and debris with a leaf net. Do this daily in autumn.
- Brush walls and floor**  
Loosen algae before it takes hold. Focus on corners and steps.
- Vacuum or run the cleaner**  
Let your Kreepy Krauly or Baracuda run for at least 3 hours after brushing.
- Empty the weir basket**  
A full basket restricts flow and overworks your pump. Check every 2–3 days.
- Backwash the filter**  
When pressure rises 80–100kPa above the clean reading. Don't over-backwash.
- Test the water**  
Check pH and chlorine at minimum. Adjust as needed using the order from Section 01.
- Add chemicals**  
Dose chlorine in the evening so the sun doesn't burn it off before it works.

## Load Shedding Tip

Run your pump during off-peak hours when power is on. Even 6 hours of circulation is enough. If you lose more than 8 hours, add a maintenance dose of chlorine to prevent algae.

## Monthly Tasks

- Check pump and filter pressure gauges for wear.
- Inspect pool cleaner hoses, diaphragms, and wheels.
- Clean the chlorinator cell if you have a salt pool.
- Top up water level (should be halfway up the weir).
- Bring a water sample in if anything looks off.

**Need supplies? We stock HTH, Africhem, pool brushes, nets, and vacuum equipment.**

# Seasonal Pool Care Calendar

South African seasons affect your pool differently than overseas guides suggest. Here is what to focus on each quarter.

## SPRING Sep – Nov

- Open the pool: remove cover, clean debris.
- Shock treat after winter dormancy.
- Inspect all equipment before heavy use.
- Check and replace worn Kreepy hoses.
- Get a lab test to set your baseline.
- Top up CYA before the harsh sun hits.

## SUMMER Dec – Feb

- Test water twice a week during heavy use.
- Run pump 8–10 hours daily minimum.
- Shock weekly if pool has heavy bather load.
- Keep CYA at 30–50ppm to protect chlorine.
- Backwash more frequently in peak season.
- Watch for phosphates from garden runoff.

## AUTUMN Mar – May

- Skim daily. Falling leaves feed algae.
- Reduce pump run time to 6–8 hours.
- Lower chlorine dosage as temps drop.
- Clean the filter thoroughly before winter.
- Trim overhanging trees now.
- Consider a pool cover to reduce debris.

## WINTER Jun – Aug

- Run pump 4–6 hours daily minimum.
- Test water fortnightly. Algae still grows.
- Keep pH and alkalinity balanced.
- Don't drain the pool. Water protects plaster.
- Service the pump and filter during off-season.
- Great time to upgrade equipment at Ridd's.

# Common Problems + Quick Fixes

## Green Water

Algae bloom from low chlorine, poor circulation, or high phosphates.

**Fix:**

Shock with 3x normal chlorine. Brush walls. Run pump 24 hours. Backwash filter next day.

## Cloudy Water

High pH, clogged filter, or low chlorine letting particles multiply.

**Fix:**

Test pH first. If high, add acid. Backwash the filter. Run the pump overnight.

## Eye & Skin Irritation

pH out of range or combined chlorine (chloramines) too high.

**Fix:**

Check pH (should be 7.2--7.6). If pH is fine, shock to break chloramines.

## Staining (Brown/Green)

Metal deposits from bore water, corroded pipes, or low pH.

**Fix:**

Get a metal test at Ridd's. Use a stain remover. Adjust pH to 7.4. Add a sequestrant.

## Pump Losing Prime

Air leak in suction line, low water level, or clogged weir basket.

**Fix:**

Check water level. Inspect the pump lid o-ring. Clear the weir basket. Tighten fittings.

## Salt Chlorinator Alarm

Low salt, dirty cell, or flow switch issue.

**Fix:**

Test salt level (aim for 4,000--6,000 ppm). Clean cell with acid wash. Check flow sensor.

**When in doubt, bring a water sample to either branch. We'll diagnose it for free.**

# Equipment Basics

Understanding your pool equipment helps you spot problems early and avoid expensive emergency repairs.



## Pool Pump

Circulates water through the filter and back to the pool.

**Warning signs:** Unusual noise or vibration | Not priming (losing suction) | Water leaks around the seal



## Sand Filter

Traps dirt through silica sand. Backwash when pressure rises.

**Warning signs:** Pressure high after backwash | Sand through return jets | Cloudy water despite correct chemistry



## Salt Chlorinator

Converts salt into chlorine automatically. Requires cell care.

**Warning signs:** Low output despite correct salt | Cell coated in calcium scale | Error codes or alarm lights



## Pool Cleaner

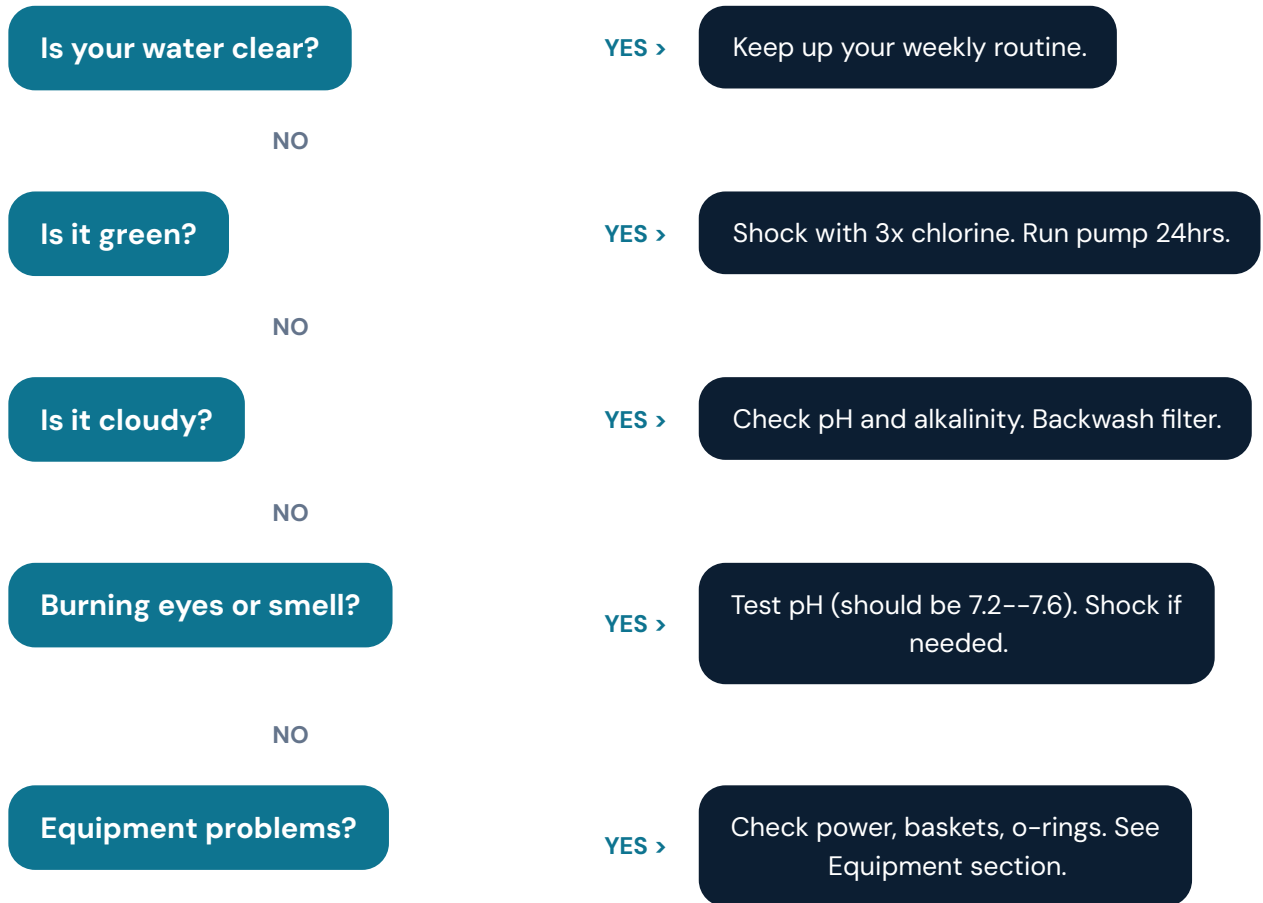
Kreepy Krauly, Baracuda, or robotic cleaners keep floors debris-free.

**Warning signs:** Stuck in one spot or moving slowly | Worn diaphragm or disc (Kreepy) | Torn hoses or missing wheels

**We stock parts for all major brands.** Kreepy Krauly, Baracuda, Pentair, HTH, Africhem, and our own Ridd's Pool Accessories range.

# Troubleshooting Flowchart

Follow this decision tree to diagnose common pool water problems.



STILL STUCK

**Bring a sample to Ridd's. We'll sort it out.**

pH	Chlorine	Alkalinity	CYA	Calcium
<b>7.2-7.6</b>	<b>1-3 ppm</b>	<b>80-120</b>	<b>30-50</b>	<b>200-400</b>

# When to Call the Experts

Most pool maintenance is straightforward DIY. But these warning signs mean it is time to get professional help before a small problem becomes an expensive one.

**! Green pool that won't clear after shocking**

If a double-shock and 48 hours of pump time hasn't fixed it, the problem is likely phosphates, a dead filter, or resistant algae strain.

**! Persistent cloudy water**

When chemistry reads fine but water stays milky, the filter media may need replacing or there's a circulation dead zone.

**! Visible cracks in the pool shell**

Hairline cracks can be cosmetic, but widening cracks or wet spots on the outside wall signal structural issues.

**! Pump making grinding or screeching noises**

Usually a failing bearing or impeller damage. Running it further can burn out the motor.

**! Water level dropping faster than evaporation**

Normal evaporation is 3--5mm per day. More than that usually means a leak in the shell, plumbing, or at the filter.

**! Salt chlorinator showing constant errors**

Could be a dead cell, flow sensor issue, or PCB failure. Cleaning doesn't fix error codes.

**! Staining that returns after treatment**

Recurring stains indicate an ongoing metal source (corroding pipes, bore water) that needs to be identified and addressed.

## Don't Wait Until It's an Emergency

Bring your water in for a free lab test. We catch problems early and recommend the right treatment before they become expensive fixes. Both branches carry a full range of parts and chemicals.

**WhatsApp us: 011 763 1130 | Walk in. No appointment needed.**



# Everything But the Water

Bring in a water sample.  
We'll test it for free.

## ROODEPOORT

227 Ontdekkers Road, Horison  
**+27 11 763 1130**

Weekdays: 08:00 – 17:00  
Saturday: 09:00 – 13:00  
Sunday & Public Holidays: Closed

## NELSPRUIT

17 Bell Street  
**+27 13 752 4485**

Weekdays: 08:00 – 17:00  
Saturday: 09:00 – 13:00  
Sunday & Public Holidays: Closed

**WhatsApp: 011 763 1130**

[riddsaqua.co.za](http://riddsaqua.co.za)

Stocking: Cemcrete | Kreepy Krauly | Baracuda | Quality | Pentair | HTH | Africhem