

Ionization

In the swimming pool industry, the term “ionization” refers to a process where metal ions are used as the primary disinfectant for the pool. The most common metals used for pool sanitation are copper and silver. Copper is effective in inhibiting and killing algae, while silver is a good bactericide. It kills contaminants.

The process involves purchasing an ionizer that is installed at your pool equipment pad and connected to a power supply. (Some have the option of solar power.) Inside the ionizer there are metals—copper, silver, and in some cases, zinc—that are charged by the electrical current and give off ions as a result. These ions dissolve into the water flow through the pool’s circulation system. This is a very effective way to keep your pool looking good and safe for swimming.

Most ionizers recommend using a small amount of chlorine as a back up to the ionizer for best results. Ionization by itself is not recognized by the national health code laws as being a stand-alone system for disinfecting swimming pools/spas. What we have found is that a proper ionizer will reduce the need for chlorine by 60-90%.

Ionizers usually need to have the metals replaced every 3-5 years, depending on the length of the swimming season. It is certainly possible to save enough money on pool chemicals to pay for the cost of the ionizer, while having clear, safe water without the drawbacks of chlorine only as a disinfectant.

Remember there are pros and cons to any sanitizing system. The drawback to using ions (metals) to sanitize your pool is that staining of the pool is possible if you do not keep the ions in their recommend range. Or, stains will appear if you heavily shock your pool with chlorine while ions are in their high range.

Heschmeyer Pools has been installing Sunshine Pool Products ionizers for the past 5 seasons, with very positive results. Their products can be found on the link below. We recommend Sunshine Ionizers because they are the least expensive to buy and install of the various ionizers we have researched. This is a product where you get good value for the price. Without naming other products, we have found that the most expensive ionizer with the nicest website is actually the most expensive and least effective ionizer available.

Please read more about this process at <http://www.sunshinepool.com/ion1.html>.