

Dutch Springs

July Opening and COVID-19 Update

June 5, 2020

By [Andrea Scott](#)

Dutch Springs is committed to the safety of our staff, guests and our community. As of today, June 5th, the stay at home order in Northampton County (where Dutch Springs resides) has been lifted, transitioning the county from the red to the yellow phase. This allows us to bring our fulltime staff back. Our first priorities are evaluating the facility and our procedures to ensure the safety of our staff and customers. ***We will work quickly and efficiently readying Dutch Springs to open with restrictions in July, after the county transitions to a green status.*** We will notify you when that change to green status occurs and an opening date is set.

We realize, because of the changes that need to, be made, this season will be different than years past. We hope you will be patient and understanding, knowing that some of the changes will only be temporary for this season.

The restrictions and requirements for the 2020 season are as follows:

Updated Hours of Operation for Scuba and Freediving:

Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday- Closed

(Instructors can call to make a reservation to bring in students)

Thursday and Friday*- 10am to 6pm

Saturday* and Sunday*- 8am to 6pm

*Camping and Night Diving will not be available in 2020

Activities that WILL NOT be available:

- **No General admission or child admission.** This means the Aqua Park and Aerial Park will not be open for the summer season of 2020. All group functions will not be available for these activities.
- **No camping** will be allowed for either divers or non-divers.
- **The Food Stand will be closed.** Prepackaged food will be available at the Blue Koi Gift Shoppe.
- **No open water swimming** will be allowed.
- **No snorkeling** will be allowed.
- **No mermaid swims** will be allowed.
- **No youth team building** will be available.
- **No night diving** will be allowed.
- **No rental tents or pavilions** will be available.

Activities that WILL be available:

- **Scuba diving** will be available, closing at each day by 6pm (no night dives)
- **Freediving** will be available.
- **Scuba equipment rental** will be available with reservations 24 hours in advance (see other requirements for retail area and Scuba rental area).

Requirements to be admitted into the park:

- All admission tickets for scuba and freediving must be purchased online 24 hrs prior to arrival and printed out. (Air fill tickets can only be purchased at our admission office.)
- Everyone entering the facility must fill out a new, updated waiver for 2020. Because of Covid-19, there have been several sentences added to our waiver from last year. Also added to the waiver is a sentence that you will need to initial that you have not been outside the country within the last 14 days.
- Only divers will be allowed to enter the park. Please do not bring anyone with you who is not diving. There is nothing for them to do.
- No one will be allowed to enter the water without wearing scuba or freediving equipment. If we have any information that a person who is not scuba diving has entered the property, we will ask them to leave.
- All customers must bring their own PPE mask, hand sanitizer and sanitizer for other items they may touch.
- Properly fitted PPE masks must be worn at all times while inside any Dutch Springs building.
- When using the bathrooms, we ask that you make your own decision as to social distancing, sanitizing and wearing a PPE mask.

- When any customer is within 6 feet of any Dutch Springs staff (in the front office, air fill, retail/rental area and all other areas on the property) the customer must be wearing a properly fitted PPE mask.
- The maximum capacity of each side of the lake (Student Side and Peninsula Side) is 250 people. This will ensure we stay within the guidelines for social distancing and group gatherings while we are open in the green phase.
- While on Dutch Springs property, each person is responsible for their own decision to wear a PPE mask and whom they need to be social distanced from. The only exception to this is when you are within 6 feet of any Dutch Springs staff member (see requirement #8).

Entrance Procedure:

1. PLEASE KEEP YOUR WINDOWS UP/CLOSED AT ALL TIMES DURING ARRIVAL!
2. Upon arrival, have your pass or ticket with the barcode facing out visible to parking attendants. You will be directed where to park.
3. All tickets and passes will be scanned from the driver's side window through the glass.
4. Safety staff will not be stationed in the roads registering group locations in the morning. Traffic control will be monitored.
5. Please respect the safety of our Dutch Springs staff by wearing a mask when within 6 feet of a staff member.
6. Instructor and Season Pass Holders
 - - Please fill out the new waiver prior to arrival.
 - If you arrive before opening Saturday or Sunday morning, please have you pass out to show Dutch Springs staff.
 - Please keep your window rolled up unless requesting a peninsula pass, then only roll down your window one inch.
 - Please respect our staff people by always wearing a PPE mask when your window is down and interacting with staff.

The retail and scuba rental areas:

- While in the Blue Koi Gift Shoppe, all customers must be wearing their PPE mask.
- Unless being fitted for scuba rental, we request you stay at least 6 feet away from all Dutch Springs staff.
- The Blue Koi Gift Shop will have coffee, tea, sodas and a limited supply of prepackaged foods for purchase.
- Only tanks filled with air (not NITROX) will be available to rent.

The Air Fill Station:

- Only air (Grade E Oxygen Compatible) will be available. Nitrox will not be available.
- An air fill ticket must be purchased and attached to your tank prior to dropping it at the air fill station.
- Air Fill Station Procedure Update
 - a. Purchase air fill ticket at the admission office.
 - b. Using tape provided at the air fill station, write your name on a piece of duct tape and attach one air fill ticket per tank.
 - c. Place the tank at the tank drop area to be filled.
 - d. All tanks to be filled will be sprayed down with a sanitizing solution prior to filling. If you do not want your tank to be sanitized, please do not drop off your tank.
 - e. Once tanks are filled, the air fill ticket will be removed. The duct tape will remain so you can identify your tank at the tank pickup area.

For our dedicated Dutch Springs Season Pass holders:

- **We have decided to extend your pass through the 2021 season! All expiration dates have automatically been extended, you don't have to notify us of your intentions.**
 - **Unlimited season pass holders**, your pass will be valid each day we are open with a new expiration date is 3/31/22.
 - Non-diving Unlimited pass holders would only have use of the pass throughout the 2021 season.
 - **Summer pass holders**, your pass will be valid each day we are open this season through 9/7/20 and next season 5/28/21 thru 9/6/21.
 - Non-diving Summer pass holders would only have use of the pass 5/28/21 to 9/6/21.
 - **Multiyear season pass holders**, we will be adding an additional year to the length of your pass.
 - **Swim training pass holders**, either 3 or 5 admissions, Your pass will be extended to be able to be used in 2021.

- If for any reason you would like to return your pass, simply email us at dutchsprings@dutchsprings.com, for a refund. Don't forget to include your name, pass holder's name and the best way to get back in touch with you.
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MESSAGE FROM THE OWNER:

This is Dutch Springs' 40th year for scuba diving and 14th for the Aqua Park and Aerial Park. These unprecedented times have caused myself and the management team to make very hard decisions in order to keep our staff and customers safe and still be viable to be open in the 2021 season.

I am sure you are wondering why we have made the decisions we made to open certain activities and close others. These were tough decisions that changed frequently over the last 3 months with new information about the virus, guidelines given by Federal, State and local officials, reaction from the general public to some requirements and financial realities.

1- We determined we could not ensure social distancing in the Aqua Park and Aerial Park and assure the safety of our staff and lifeguards.

2- We would not have enough lifeguards because of the ever-changing status of international travel and the J-1 VISA program. We rely on this program to fill in the gaps left by the shortage of local lifeguards.

3- The amount of time we could be open would be restricted. As it is, we will not open the park for scuba diving until sometime in July. With the students going back to school starting in the middle of August, we would be losing a large percentage of customers and American staff so it would not be safe to have customers here. Therefore, we would probably only have one month to one and a half months to be open.

4- Because of social distancing, capacity limits and reduction in operational days, it was determined that our income would not be sufficient to pay the wages, liability insurance, and all other expenses.

5- A majority of youth groups and camps have already cancelled this summer's events for the safety of their children. These groups are the bread and butter for the financial health of the park.

6- We decided we could not keep the water attractions and the harnesses sanitized without effecting the quality of the water and the safety of the material the harnesses are made from.

7- The largest financial consideration other than payroll is the liability insurance. Our liability insurance is two policies one for scuba diving and one for everything else. All of the activities listed above that are not open are included in the everything else policy. The cost of which, we decided was too great so it was canceled for this year so we did not have to pay it. Don't worry we will be able to get it back for next year.

As previously stated, this is an unprecedented time with challenges no business owner has ever had before. These decisions were not made lightly with considering the effect on our customers, staff and financial viability. We hope with your understanding, support and assistance from our bank, we will be opening completely for the 2021 season.

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