

Why are bathing suits required to swim at the Burlingame Aquatic Center?

First, it's a hygiene matter. Typically, people tend to only wear a bathing suit while at the pool, not for other activities. Gym shorts or bathing suits with underwear worn underneath is more likely to be unsanitary or soiled and potentially introduce bacteria and germs we try to keep out of the pool. While chlorine is used to disinfect the water, the extreme amounts required to kill germs such as cryptosporidium, shigella or giardia, would be an unsafe amount of chlorine for bathers. Street clothes can also carry much more detergent and dirt which is not good for the water chemistry, not to mention dye release from the chlorine.

The second reason is a safety concern. To avoid becoming heavy when wet, bathing suits are lightweight and do not absorb very much water, making it easier for a person to swim. Additionally, if a lifeguard attempts a rescue, clothing other than a bathing suit can hamper the rescue and endanger the individual and lifeguard.

Appropriate swimwear means a suit designed for swimming, generally made of synthetic materials such as polyester, nylon and Lycra (spandex). Most bathing suits use several materials, including the outer fabric and a lining, as well as elastic. Bathing suits with adjustable straps often have plastic or metal sliders and trunk style suits often have a nylon drawstring. The outer fabric of a bathing suit is generally spandex, chosen for its color or pattern, while the lining may be a similar fabric chosen for its modesty qualities. Some bathing suits, such as trunks, use a mesh lining rather than a spandex one. "Appropriate swimwear" does not include; workout shorts, t-shirts, pants, cover-ups, sports bras, or other clothing that is not made specifically for swimming.