



Animal and Plant  
Health Inspection  
Service

USDA APHIS Animal  
Care  
2150 Centre Ave.  
Building B, 3W11  
Fort Collins, CO  
80526

January 6, 2023

Sea World of Florida  
7007 Sea World Drive  
Orlando, FL 32821

Certificate Number: 58-C-0077  
Customer Number: 3108

Dear Ms. Pardo and Mr. Peterson,

Your January 5, 2023 dated appeal of citations on the USDA inspection report dated December 5, 2022, was reviewed by USDA APHIS Animal Care's Critical Issues Manager as well as the Director of Animal Welfare Operations.

The appeal process specifically states that appeal requests due to failure of the first and second inspections during the process for application for license are not permitted. As can be referenced in the USDA Animal Welfare Act Regulations, Part 2, Subpart A, section 2.3 – Demonstration of compliance and regulations, only the third failed inspection attempt can be appealed. The Animal Care Tech Note on the Inspection Report Appeals Process (APHIS 41-35-080, April 2022) has been included for your reference when submitting future appeals.

Relicense inspections are announced inspections and must be passed demonstrating full compliance to be issued an updated 3-year certificate of license. The appeal received was for the December 5, 2022, first failed relicense inspection. The second relicense inspection was passed on December 8, 2022. Sea World of Florida successfully completed the relicensing process upon passing their second relicense inspection and was issued their updated license certificate on December 21, 2022; therefore, Animal Care cannot consider the specifics of your appeal submitted on behalf of Sea World of Florida.

Please note this regulation for future appeals. All decisions made by the appeals team are final and represent USDA's final determination for this appeal.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Gibbens, DVM  
Director, Animal Welfare Operations  
USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

*USDA Animal Care. Ensuring humane treatment for animals covered by the Animal Welfare Act.*



## Inspection Report

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Sea World of Florida  
7007 Sea World Drive  
Orlando, FL 32821

Customer ID: **3108**  
Certificate: **58-C-0077**  
Site: 002  
SEA WORLD OF FLORIDA

Type: RE-LICENSE INSPECTION  
Date: 05-DEC-2022

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### 3.106(a)

#### Water quality.

A review of water quality records since late August 2020 until present day identified numerous total chlorine readings where the levels in several pool systems actively containing animals were above 1.0PPM. The highest readings were documented at Discovery Cove in DC-1, DC-2, DC-3 and DC Support. At the time of the inspection, the facility was taking water samples every three hours. The 8am and 1pm samples were being collected by animal trainers at various inconsistent locations along the pool sides. The samples taken throughout the rest of the day were being collected by life support staff at consistent locations and depths opposite the inflow valves. Furthermore, the facility's acceptable total chlorine parameters were set between 0.8PPM and 1.2PPM with 1.0PPM being the optimal level. DC-Support pool had 107 readings and DC-1 pool had 554 readings that were above 1.0PPM over the two-year period.

At the time of inspection, there was at least one animal receiving treatment for varying states of eye conditions. Roxy, a 24yr old female Bottlenose dolphin, was under active treatment for an ocular condition. Furthermore, Calli a 24yr old female Bottlenose dolphin received treatment in October 2022 after trainers noted her left eye was squinting. Her veterinary journal indicates that she was seen squinting on October 12th, 2022. The chlorine readings for her pool (Key West) three days prior to the observation were as follows; October 9th 8am: 1.1PPM & 1pm: 1.2PPM; October 10th 8am: 1.2PPM & 1pm: 0.9PPM; October 11th 8am: 1.1PPM & 1pm: 0.8PPM.

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Prepared By: E GONZALEZ

USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

Date:  
15-DEC-2022

Title: VETERINARY MEDICAL  
OFFICER

Received by Title: Facility Representative

Date:  
15-DEC-2022





## Inspection Report

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Industry standards set the maximum level of total chlorine at 1.0PPM. Total chlorine is a measurement of both free chlorine and chloramines. Chloramines are much more irritating to an animal's skin, eyes and lungs than free chlorine. Increasing chlorine to levels above industry standards in pools that actively contain animals in order to maintain coliform levels below 1000 MPN per 100ml of water is not an acceptable method of disinfection. Total chlorine levels above 1.0PPM over extended periods of time can cause marine mammals skin, respiratory, and eye issues. Constant management and maintaining chlorine levels below 1.0PPM is necessary to maintain the health and welfare of the marine mammals. The facility shall ensure that the primary enclosure shall not contain water which would be detrimental to the health of the marine mammal contained therein.

Correct prior to scheduling your next relicense inspection.

### **3.109                      Critical** **Separation.**

The facility failed to separate Rascal, a 25yr old male Bottlenose dolphin, in a timely manner after he sustained increasingly serious injuries from conspecifics. Veterinary journal notes on October 27th, 2022, for Rascal document that he was displaced several times over the past week since social group changes occurred. He had had an increasing number of superficial rakes throughout his body, and trainers called that morning to report a few deeper rakes. He had been trembling and unwilling to lift his flukes. Specific observations note marked diffuse rakes covering the dorsal fin, both pectoral fins (right worse than left), peduncle, flukes and face including the sides of face (right worse than left) and mandible. Some of the rakes were through the skin with a small amount of fresh bleeding. Older rakes had white scar tissue forming. Rakes covered about 30% of body surface. He was unwilling to fully lift his flukes. It should be noted that Rascal's dental arcade is worn away, and he was unable to defend himself from these interactions. Rascal was prescribed pain medication and allowed to remain with the same social group while the facility monitored the behavior in the social group to see if a primary aggressor could be identified.

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Three days later on October 30th, 2022, trainers reported to veterinary staff that Rascal was out of F pool that morning and was bleeding quite a bit. Rascal was laying on his left side and had many deep rake marks on his face, ventrum, fluke blades, pectoral flippers and dorsal and ventral peduncles. Rake marks were warm to the touch and many were actively bleeding. Rascal was moved to med pool with a companion dolphin. His veterinary journal indicates that his pain medication was continued and antibiotics and corticosteroids added on. The veterinarian then instructed that Rascal not return to the social group in pool F. Two younger male dolphins were subsequently identified as the initiators and removed from the social group.

Marine mammals that are not compatible must not be housed in the same enclosure. They must not be housed near other animals that cause them unreasonable stress or discomfort or interfere with their good health. The facility must ensure that marine mammals sustaining serious injuries from negative interactions with conspecifics be removed from those situations in a proactive and timely manner.

Corrected at the time of the inspection.

This is a 1st Re-License Inspection for a Class C license. The inspection and exit briefing were conducted with the applicant.

All items must be in compliance within 2 more inspections or by February 5th, 2023 or the applicant will forfeit the license fee and must wait 6 months to reapply. Please contact your inspector to schedule your next Re-License Inspection.

Regulated activity can continue under your existing USDA license until it expires.

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## Inspection Report

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Additional Inspectors:

Charles Palmer, VETERINARY MEDICAL OFFICER

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USDA, APHIS, Animal Care

Title: VETERINARY MEDICAL  
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### Species Inspected

Cust No	Cert No	Site	Site Name	Inspection
3108	58-C-0077	002	SEA WORLD OF FLORIDA	05-DEC-2022

Count	Scientific Name	Common Name
000005	<i>Orcinus orca</i>	KILLER WHALE
000002	<i>Potos flavus</i>	KINKAJOU
000005	<i>Callithrix geoffroyi</i>	WHITE-FRONTED MARMOSET
000003	<i>Cephalorhynchus commersonii</i>	COMMERSON'S DOLPHIN
000068	<i>Tursiops truncatus</i>	BOTTLENOSE DOLPHIN
000026	<i>Trichechus manatus</i>	CARIBBEAN MANATEE
000028	<i>Aonyx cinereus</i>	ORIENTAL SMALL-CLAWED OTTER
000002	<i>Delphinapterus leucas</i>	BELUGA WHALE
000001	<i>Choloepus didactylus</i>	LINNAEUS'S TWO-TOED SLOTH
000002	<i>Tolypeutes matacus</i>	SOUTHERN THREE-BANDED ARMADILLO
000094	<i>Zalophus californianus</i>	CALIFORNIA SEA LION
000005	<i>Odobenus rosmarus</i>	WALRUS
000041	<i>Phoca vitulina</i>	HARBOR SEAL
000004	<i>Tamandua tetradactyla</i>	SOUTHERN TAMANDUA
000001	<i>Choloepus hoffmanni</i>	HOFFMANN'S TWO-TOED SLOTH
000287	<b>Total</b>	