

CALDERA[®] SPA COVER TIPS AND FAQs

Tips for spa cover care and answers to frequently asked questions concerning Caldera spa covers.

Why are Watkins' covers so safe?

- All Watkins' covers and the child-resistant safety locks (cover locks) are UL classified in accordance with the ASTM F1346-91 Standard for Manual Spa Safety Covers.
- The UL classified number is E-173712.
- Watkins' covers meet requirements for the ASTM Standard static load bearing.
- Watkins is committed to delivering safe products for consumer use.

How often should a cover be cleaned?

- Watkins recommends cleaning and conditioning the cover monthly. This will help maintain the vinyl and keep it looking beautiful.
- The following cleaning instructions can also be found in your spa owner's manual:
 - Using a garden hose, spray your cover to loosen and rinse away any dirt and debris.
 - Then, using a large sponge or a soft bristle brush and a very mild soap solution (1 teaspoon dishwashing liquid with 2 gallons of water) or baking soda (sodium bicarbonate), scrub the vinyl top in a circular motion.

How to Care for Your Cover

- Do not allow the vinyl top to dry with a soap film on it before it is rinsed clean.
- Scrub the perimeter and side flaps, then rinse clean.
- Rinse off the underside of the cover (use no soap), and wipe clean with a dry rag.

NOTE: If you have a spa with a real redwood cabinet rather than a synthetic wood cabinet, you will need to either remove the cover from the spa prior to cleaning, or use only water to clean the cover. This will allow you to avoid getting soap or baking soda on the wood cabinet, which may cause black spots on the redwood.

How to Care for Your Cover

continued

TIP: Be sure to avoid getting any soap in your spa water.

- After cleaning your cover, apply a thin film of cover protectant (as recommended by your authorized Caldera® dealer) to the vinyl surface with a soft cloth, then buff to a high luster.
- Be sure to condition at least once before every season change.

TIP: It's important to use a cover conditioner that is formulated to work with the vinyl properties. Many vinyl products actually deteriorate the vinyl.

Any tips for hard-to-remove stains?

- To remove tree sap, use cigarette lighter fluid (**not** charcoal lighter fluid). You should use it sparingly and buff with saddle soap immediately afterwards, then wipe dry.
- Paint cannot be removed once dry, as solvents used to remove paint will damage the vinyl. Grease and grime may be removed with a thorough washing using a mild liquid dishwashing soap (or baking soda), and water.

IMPORTANT!

It's crucial to maintain proper water chemistry most importantly, for your health but also for the health of your spa and cover. Even when your spa is closed and not in use, your water chemistry is important.

Why does my cover smell like mildew?

- If your cover has mildew, unfortunately, this is a symptom of improper water chemistry and is not covered by the warranty.
- There is, however, a simple recipe to eliminate it. We recommend you consult your authorized Caldera[®] dealer first, before you follow the steps below:
 - If your cover has a cover lifter attached to it, it will need to be removed.
 - Next, remove the foam cores from the vinyl encasement. This is easier to do in warmer weather as the vinyl will have a little more give when it's warm.
 - Mix a teaspoon of mild dishwashing soap with one cup of bleach in a gallon of water.

Why does my cover smell like mildew?

continued

- Using a soft bristle brush, scrub the inside of the encasement. Then, using a soft cloth (nothing linty), wipe down each of the foam cores, on all sides. Rinse these, and the inside of the encasement thoroughly.
- Place the encasement “inside out” in the sun and allow it to dry completely. Place the cores in the shade to dry. Do **not** put them in the sun or they will melt!
- When the cores and encasement are completely dry, spray both with a mildew inhibitor, allow to dry, then reassemble.
- Be sure to check your water chemistry. When in doubt, take a water sample to your Caldera[®] dealer for evaluation.

The bottom vinyl of my cover is sagging and looks like it has blisters.

What is wrong?

- Unfortunately, this is a symptom of improper water chemistry and is not covered by the warranty.
- If necessary, you may be able to purchase a replacement encasement from your Caldera® dealer.
- Other signs of improper chemical balance can be:
 - A drastic color change on the bottom vinyl, such as a bleached look or the vinyl looks like burlap. However, some fading is normal.
 - The vinyl tears apart easily and falls into the water.
- Vinyl repair patch kits are available at most hardware stores. It's usually an easy process, and most probably won't even show once repaired.

The insides of my cover are soggy. Do I have to buy a whole new cover?

- Replacement cores can be ordered for you by your Caldera® dealer; however, if your cover is past the warranty period, it may be wiser to replace your entire cover. It really depends on the age and condition of the vinyl encasement. Your Caldera dealer will be able to give you the best advice.
- If you've already replaced the cores and they continue to get soggy you may want to check for puddling of water on your cover. It is important to make sure your spa is sitting on level ground. It is possible that when you re-level the spa, the puddling problem will go away.

What can I do to make my cover last as long as it can?

There are several things you can do to protect your spa cover throughout the year.

- Make sure your water chemistry is healthy to avoid mildew in the spring. Test your water on a regular basis to maintain clean water and a good pH. This will go a long way to maintaining a healthy cover, spa, and you!
- Be sure to condition the top of your vinyl cover at least once before the first snow or ice, and if possible, monthly during the winter. This will keep the vinyl supple and keep it from drying out under harsh winter conditions.

What can I do to make my cover last as long as it can?

Continued

- Remove snow accumulation to avoid stress and breakage of the foam cores. It is important to do this gently, by using a soft broom. When removing snow, ice or leaves, avoid damaging the vinyl - do **not** use sharp tools like rakes or shovels.
- Be careful when handling tie-down straps and handles. While our vinyl is well rated for cold crack, the vinyl won't stretch in extreme cold conditions.

Help!

My dog thinks my cover is a toy!

You are not alone...first, please do not harm your pet. We have heard about this from other spa owners, not only concerning pets but wild animals too. Here are some suggestions that may help to deter pets and critters from eating or otherwise damaging the cover:

- Try sprinkling some cayenne pepper all around the spa perimeter or just place some cayenne pepper inside a small baggie or other plastic container, cut tiny holes, and place it on the cover. Most pets/animals do not like the smell and this may encourage them to avoid the spa area.
- Check with your veterinarian for spray-on products that discourage pets from chewing on furniture, etc.

More Tips for a Healthy Cover

A healthy spa cover is essential in keeping your spa clean and ready for your enjoyment. In addition to the care recommendations you have seen thus far, we urge you to follow the following tips:

- Always lock cover straps in place, to secure the cover when the spa is not in use.
- Treat your spa cover like you would a piece of custom crafted furniture.
- Use only the reinforced handles to move your cover. Straps, flaps and seams can tear if you use them like a handle, especially around the hinge area.

More Tips for a Healthy Cover

Continued

Push the cover off with the bottom half of the cover to keep from adding undue stress to the hinge area to keep it from tearing.



More Tips for a Healthy Cover

Continued

- Clean and condition your spa cover on a monthly basis. It's always good to do this before the start of a new season.
- Remove snow buildup to avoid breakage of the foam cores.
- Maintain proper water chemistry. It will keep you healthy and extend the life of your cover and your spa!

DO NOT

- Drag or lift the spa cover using the flaps or the cover lock straps.
- Walk, stand, sit, or jump on the cover.
- Place anything on the cover including any type of plastic tarp or drop cloth. This may result in melted foam cores, which are not covered under warranty.
- Leave foam cores which have been removed from the vinyl encasement in the sun.
- Use any cover lifters, chemicals or cleaners except those recommended by Watkins Manufacturing Corporation.
- Leave a Caldera[®] cover lifter in an open position, with a wind condition above 10 mph and/or occasional gusts up to 20 mph.
- Allow children on top of the cover, or alone in the spa without parental supervision.