

More Mistakes Were Made!

Session Chair

Kathy Gustafson-Hilton, Hands On! Studio

Presenters

Jane Werner, Executive Director, Children's Museum of Pittsburgh

Devon Hamilton, Experience & Learning Director, Blue Rhino Studio

Trudi Plummer, Director of Education, Maine Discovery Museum

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April 26-28, 2023



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Our Learning Objectives

Admitting mistakes isn't a sign of weakness. It's a sign of professionalism to learn from other's mistakes to avoid repeating them.

Together we can create a playful, safe, interactive environment that encourages us to share and celebrate personal and organizational growth and learning.

Reflection helps us identify what we, as a field, are doing to encourage or suppress discussion of mistakes that we (and our museums) make.

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Start thinking!

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Know Your Regulator

Water tables are easy, right? What could go wrong?

A common mistake that people make when trying to design something completely foolproof is to underestimate the ingenuity of complete fools.

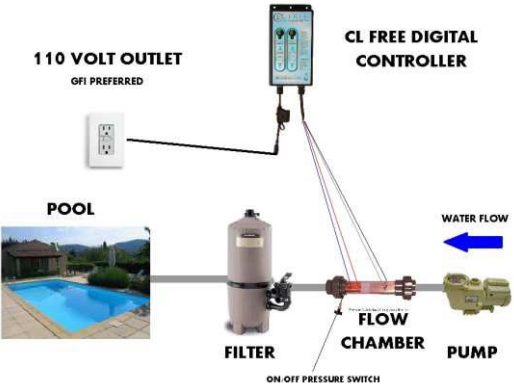
Douglas Adams



Grab a brush and create!



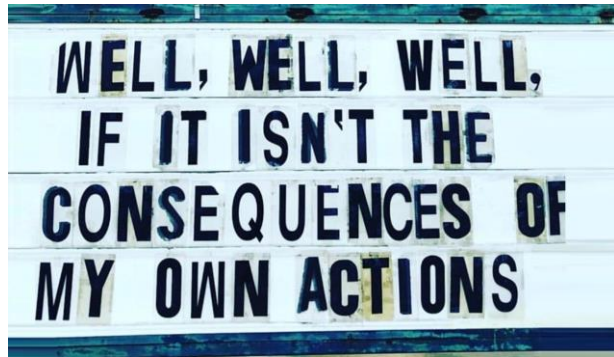
Should we rely on chemicals,
or go state of the art?





Grab brush, splash

Interactive water play structure



Consequences (Uh-oh):

- Adapt and reconfigure 3 different major water exhibits in 3 different exhibit halls - eventually removing one
- Undertake daily cleaning and maintenance schedule that consumed up to 25% of our maintenance team's time
- Considerable down time of the water exhibits during public hours
- Crash course in pool chemistry for *everyone*

But....

We learned

- Got very picky about regulatory compliance by contractors
- Made sure we talk w/ regulators during design and construction
- Made sure staff were qualified on safety inspection
- Built relationships with those responsible for inspection





Awarding the Epic Failure Trophy 2023

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Thank you for coming to More Mistakes Were Made!

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