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## Drainage problems close Palm Coast pool

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PALM COAST -- Weather woes have shut down Palm Coast's public swimming pool, forcing school swim teams and community groups to find other places to practice and hold classes.

And although the Frieda Zamba Swimming Pool complex is expected to reopen next week, the closing has hampered the training of the Flagler Palm Coast boys and girls swimming teams, boys swim coach Tom Gillen said.

"It's been kind of rough on us," he said.

The pool -- adjacent to Belle Terre Park -- was closed last month after heavy rains caused drainage problems and flooded the parking lot, city officials said.

The complex, named after a former four-time world surfing professional champion, houses a 25-by-70-yard pool, classrooms and office space.

Belle Terre Park is undergoing renovations that -- ironically -- will improve drainage on the park's soccer fields and repave its parking lots.

At the same time, the Flagler County school district is constructing a two-story building between Buddy Taylor Middle and Wadsworth Elementary schools that will house 54 new classrooms and a mega-cafeteria that will seat about 1,000.

That project resulted in the permanent closing of School Entrance, which was once the main road for both schools, the pool and Belle Terre Park.

In anticipation of School Entrance's closing, city officials improved access to the park off Parkview Drive.

Recent heavy rains saturated the park area, however, and forced the city to close the park altogether, the city's Engineering and Stormwater director John Moden said.

Crews are working to dry the area out and the park is scheduled to reopen next Thursday, Moden said.

The pool area is also scheduled to reopen Thursday, Moden said. Some classes that were offered at Frieda Zamba have been moved to the Palm Coast Community Center or James Holland Park, Recreation and Parks director John Jackson said.

Jackson described the ordeal as "very frustrating."

"We're . . . trying to find a long-range solution so that this never happens again," he said.

Meanwhile, school and community swim teams have moved their practices to other pools.

Flagler's swim teams now practice at the Belle Terre Swim and Racquet Club. The switch in locations hasn't been easy because the teams -- which usually practice after school -- must now practice at 5 a.m., Gillen said.

"I think it's a little much for some of the kids" to practice so early in the morning and still continue with a full day of classes, he said.

Judi Rich, a member of local swim club [Dynoswim](#), said the group of about 15 swimmers was also allowed to use the pool at the racquet club, but only a few have been able to meet.

"The majority of us have been driving to Ormond (Beach) or (are) not swimming," she said. The pool's closing forced Valerie Carruthers' yoga class to move to the community center.

Carruthers said the relocation was a "temporary inconvenience" and she has retained all of her students.

"I'm sure the center will come back," she said. "I'm happy that I've been able to continue to serve my students."

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