

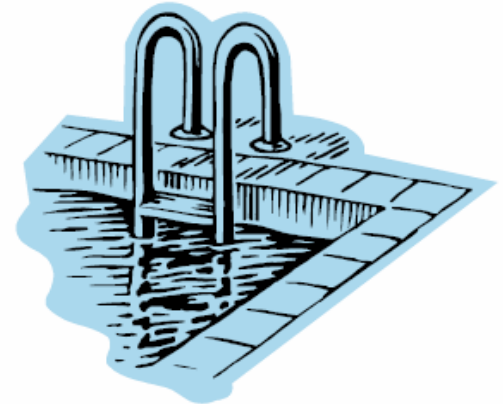
Private Residential Pools and Spas

Important Information for Manufacturers/Retailers

As a manufacturer/retailer of pools and spas there is important information you need to be aware of regarding new in-ground, above-ground pools and spa barrier regulations to be shared with your customers in order to prevent drownings in backyard pools.

Did You Know...

- Among children ages 1 to 4 years, most drownings happen in residential swimming pools. Most young children who drowned in pools were last seen in the home, had been out of sight less than 5 minutes, and were in the care of one or both parents at the time. (Washington State Dept of Health)
- Drowning is the second leading cause of injury-related death for children ages 1-14 in the U.S.



Children are attracted to water. They can easily slip out the door to the pool or spa and fall in if there is no barrier. Once a child falls in, they usually don't scream for help, they simply slip under the water quietly.

New Barrier Requirements for Pools and Spas in Washington State

There are new Washington State building code requirements for residential pools and spas that will start July 1st, 2007. These requirements apply to above-ground pools that hold over 24 inches of water (2006 International Building Code, Appendix G, Section AG102).

As a manufacturer and contractor of new pools and spas it is important that you fully understand these new building codes and talk with your customers about them before they have their new residential pool or spa installed.

Overview of barriers that meet new regulations:

- A barrier that is **at least** 4 feet high and surrounds the ladder (as shown above). The gate for this barrier needs to be out of the child's reach and self-closing/self latching:
 - the latch releasing mechanism for the gate should be **at least 3 inches below the top of the gate on the side facing the pool.**
 - the gate should not have an opening **greater than 1/2 inch** within **18 inches** of the latch releasing mechanism.

Options include:

a) Solid barriers/ fences that are **at least** 48 inches high with gaps between the fence and ground that are less than 2 inches.

b.) Barriers and fences with vertical spacing.

c.) Chain link or mesh fences: the **maximum** mesh size for these types of fences is **2.25 inches diagonally and 3.18 inches horizontally**. Using slats in chain link type fences can help reduce the ability for a child to climb over.

d.) Self-latching/ self-closing gates: *please see previous page for specific measurements on latch releasing mechanisms.*

* For more specific information about these barriers please contact **your local building official** -<http://www.wabo.org/jurisdiction/map.html> or the **Washington State Building Code Council** - <http://www.sbcc.wa.gov/sbccindx.html>.

For Above Ground Pools

There are two barrier options for above-ground pools to prevent children from gaining access to the pool.

- 1.) The steps or ladder going up to the pool can be removed, locked or secured to prevent access.
- 2.) The steps or ladder can be surrounded by a barrier.

These barriers must meet the regulation standards described above when used.

Power safety covers

A power safety cover can be a barrier option for pools and a safety cover is an option for spas. Covers should support the weight of a young child and meet the safety performance requirements of the American Society for Testing and Materials Standards. If the private pool or spa has a safety cover that meets all standards it can be used as a barrier and other barriers are **not** necessarily.

Please share this information with your customers. Barriers for pools are required as part of a new state-wide regulation and can help prevent backyard drownings among children.

For more information please go to:

- **Association of Pool and Spa Professionals** - www.theapsp.org
- **U.S. Consumer Safety Product Commission** -<http://www.cpsc.gov/cpsc/pub/pubs/chdrown.html>.
- **Your local public health department** - <http://www.doh.wa.gov/LHJMap/LHJMap.htm>
- **Injury Fact Sheets**-http://www.usa.safekids.org/content_documents/Drowning_facts.pdf
Clear Danger: A National Study of Childhood Drowning and Related Attitudes and Behaviors (2004) - <http://www.usa.safekids.org/NSKW.cfm>
- **Injury and Violence Prevention, Public Health- Seattle & King County**
Pool and Water Safety
<http://www.metrokc.gov/HEALTH/injury/drowning.htm>
- **Children's Hospital and Regional Medical Center**
Drowning Prevention and Water Safety Information
www.seattlechildrens.org/dp/ or www.drowning-prevention.org
- **Safe Kids USA** - <http://www.usa.safekids.org/index.cfm>

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