

POOL ENCLOSURES AND DROWNING PREVENTION MEASURES

A **Swimming Pool** is defined as “any structure intended for swimming, recreational bathing or wading that contains water over 18 inches deep. Swimming pool includes in-ground, above-ground and on-ground pools, hot tubs, spas, portable spas and non-portable wading pools”. A minimum 60” tall fence, pool barrier or pool enclosure that completely surrounds all pools must be in place and maintained at all times. All gates or doors opening through such fence, structure, pool barrier or enclosure shall be kept securely closed at all such times when not in actual use and must have a self-closing and self-latching device designed and capable of keeping such door or gate securely closed at all times when not in use. See page 2 for required components in this barrier.

Whenever a building permit is issued for construction of a new swimming pool or spa, or any building permit is issued for remodeling of an existing pool or spa, at a private, single-family home, at least **two** of the following seven drowning prevention safety features must be installed:

1. The pool shall be isolated from access to the home by an enclosure that meets the requirements below.
2. The pool shall incorporate removable mesh pool fencing that meets ASTM F2286 standards, in conjunction with a gate that is self-closing and self-latching and can accommodate a key lockable device.
3. The pool shall be equipped with an approved safety pool cover that meets all requirements of the ASTM F1346.
4. The residence shall be equipped with exit alarms on those doors providing direct access to the pool.
5. All doors providing direct access from the home to the swimming pool shall be equipped with a self-closing, self-latching device with a release mechanism placed no lower than 54 inches above the floor.
6. Swimming pool alarms certified to the ASTM F2208 “Standards Specification for Pool Alarms” that, when placed in pools, will sound upon detection of accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water.
7. Other means of protection as approved by the Building Official, if the degree of protection afforded is equal to or greater than that afforded by any of the devices set forth in items 1-4, and have been independently verified by an approved testing laboratory as meeting standards for those devices established by the ASTM or the American Society of Testing Mechanical Engineers (ASME).

The pool barrier enclosure must be installed and functional properly before water may be introduced into any pool or spa, typically at the 703 Pre-Plaster inspection.

The two drowning safety prevention devices are also required to be in place and functioning properly at the 999-Final inspection.

POOL BARRIERS AND POOL ENCLOSURES

1. The pool enclosure must have a minimum height of 60 inches above grade, measured on the side of the barrier that faces away from the swimming pool.
2. The space between finished grade and the bottom of the pool enclosure must be less than 2 inches, measured on the side of the barrier that faces away from the swimming pool.
3. All gaps or other openings in a pool enclosure shall not allow passage of a 4-inch-diameter sphere.
4. The outside surface free of protrusions, cavities, or other physical characteristics that would serve as handholds or footholds that could enable a child below the age of five years to climb over.
5. Access doors or gates must comply with the above pool enclosure requirements, and the following:
 - a. All access doors or gates through a pool enclosure shall open outward away from the pool.
 - b. All doors and gates in a pool enclosure must be self-closing and have a self-latching device.
 - c. The release mechanism of a self-latching device must be at least 60 inches above the bottom of the gate on the outside of the pool enclosure.

POOL DRAINS AND DRAIN COVERS

New pools or spas are required to have either have at least two circulation suction outlets per pump that are hydraulically balanced and symmetrically plumbed through one or more “T” fittings, separated by at least three feet in any dimension, or be designed to use alternatives to suction outlets including, but not limited to, skimmers or perimeter overflow systems to direct the pool water to the recirculation pump.

When remodeling or otherwise modifying an existing swimming pool, toddler pool, or spa, the suction outlet or suction outlets must be upgraded and equipped with anti-entrapment grates, as specified in the ANSI/APSP-16 performance standard or a successor standard designated by the federal Consumer Product Safety Commission.

The circulation system shall have the capacity to provide a complete turnover of pool water, as specified in Section 3124B of Chapter 31B of the California Building Standards Code.

Suction outlets must incorporate anti-entrapment grates, as specified in the ANSI/APSP-16 that cannot be removed except with the use of tools. Slots of openings in the grates or similar protective devices shall be of a shape, area and arrangement that would prevent physical entrapment and would not pose any suction hazard to bathers.

Any backup safety system that an owner of a new swimming pool or spa may choose to install in addition to these requirements shall meet the standards as published in the document, “Guidelines for Entrapment Hazards: Making Pools and Spas Safer,” Publication Number 363, March 2005, United States Consumer Products Safety Commission.

(References: Health and Safety Code Sections §115921 through §115929, and the 2019 California Building Code Section 3109.)