

Swimming Pool/Spa Safety Checklist

Safety around swimming pools and spas is an important issue for your family and visitors to your home. Drowning is the most common cause of preventable death of children aged 0–5 years. Over the past five years, 16 toddlers have drowned in Western Australia. For every drowning death, it is estimated that 10 children are admitted to hospital following a near-drowning incident (160 children over the past five years).

The safety requirements are determined by the approval date for when your pool or spa was installed, which can be checked by calling the City on **9400 4262**.

The City is required to inspect pools and spas for their safety on a frequent basis and the below checklist provides useful information to monitor compliance on common areas, prior to the City undertaking an inspection.

Checklist for pools and spas approved before 5 November 2001

Doors with direct access to the pool must:

- Self close and self latch (go back to the closed position and latch after being opened to any extent).
- Have the door latch at a minimum height of 1.5m above the inside floor level.
- For double hinged doors, one side fixed shut with a bracket, with the other door to self-close and self latch and the latch at a minimum height of 1.5m above the inside floor level.
- Pet doors are not acceptable.

Windows must either:

- Have a security grill, or
- Have a device that restricts the window from opening more than 100mm. The device must require the use of a tool to remove it (e.g. screwdriver/spanner). Key locks or thumb screws are not permitted.

Fences must:

- Be a minimum height of 1.2m high from ground level or any higher point (e.g. retaining wall, garden bed, ledge, foothold).
- Any gaps are not to exceed 100mm, including under the fence or between vertical members. The ground must be stabilised under the fence.

Gates accessing the pool/spa must:

- Open outwards from the pool/spa area.
- Self-close and self-latch (swing back to the closed position and latch after being opened to any extent).
- Have the gate latch located at a minimum height of 1.5m above the ground level or any higher points (e.g. retaining wall, garden bed, ledge, foothold).

Climbable objects (including barbecues, flower pots, trees, retaining walls, plumbing, cubby houses):

- Inside a pool enclosure must be 300mm from the barrier/fence.
- Outside a pool enclosure must be at least 500mm from the barrier/fence, and 900mm from the top of the barrier/fence.

Checklist for pools and spas approved on or after 5 November 2001, but before 1 May 2016

Doors with direct access are NOT PERMITTED. Any door must be permanently sealed closed and all door hardware removed.

- Pet doors are not acceptable.

Windows must either:

- Have a security grill, or
- Have a device that restricts the window from opening more than 100mm. The device must require the use of a tool to remove it (e.g. screwdriver/spanner). Key locks or thumb screws are not permitted.

Fences must:

- Be a minimum height of 1.2m high from ground level or any higher point (e.g. retaining wall, garden bed, ledge, foothold).
- Any gaps are not to exceed 100mm, including under the fence or between vertical members. The ground must be stabilised under the fence.

Gates accessing the pool/spa must:

- Open outwards from the pool/spa area.
- Self-close and self-latch (swing back to the closed position and latch after being opened to any extent).
- Have the gate latch located at a minimum height of 1.5m above the ground level or any higher points (e.g. retaining wall, garden bed, ledge, foothold).

Climbable objects (including barbecues, flower pots, trees, retaining walls, plumbing, cubby houses):

- Inside a pool enclosure must be 300mm from barrier/fence.
- Outside a pool enclosure must be at least 500mm from the barrier/fence, or 900mm from the top of the barrier/fence.

Checklist for pools and spas approved on or after 1 May 2016

The requirements for pools and spas approved on or after 1 May 2016 have the same requirement as those identified in this document for pools and spas approved on or after 5 November 2001, but before 1 May 2016.

In addition, fences along boundaries (e.g. a fence between a neighbour, street or other public property) must:

- Be a minimum height of 1.8m from the finished ground level inside the pool area with the top 900mm to be non-climbable. The finished ground level includes any planter beds against the fence (i.e. the fence must be 1.8m from the level of the planter bed).

Safety alert – swimming pool skimmer boxes

Unprotected or uncovered skimmer boxes can cause serious and permanent harm to a child.

Older fiberglass pools with skimmer boxes moulded into the side of a pool are highly unlikely to be safe as a child may easily lift the cover of the pool skimmer box and sit inside them. Children in Western Australia have suffered serious injury, or died, as a result of sitting on open skimmer boxes.

Further information regarding this safety alert is available via the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety website at commerce.wa.gov.au

Should you have any concerns regarding a skimmer box, please contact Consumer Protection's Advice Line on **1300 304 054**, or email at consumer@dmirs.wa.gov.au

Alternatively, visit the ACCC Product Safety Australia website at productsafety.gov.au or contact a local pool retail store for expert advice.

Further information

For further information, please contact the City's Compliance and Regulatory Services on **9400 4262**.

Alternatively, information is provided on the City's website at joondalup.wa.gov.au

Please note: Due to the highly technical nature of regulations and standards applicable to safety barriers for pools and spas, the information and requirements listed above are neither complete nor exhaustive, but are provided on the basis for ease of reference. It is recommended that this information be read in conjunction with Rules for Pools and Spas available on the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety website at commerce.wa.gov.au