

A guide to Fencing your Swimming Pool

The Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987 defines a swimming pool as any excavation, structure or product (including a spa pool) capable of being used for swimming, paddling or bathing. It also requires all pools deeper than 400mm to be fenced, and that fences comply with all provisions.

What are my responsibilities as a pool owner?

All pool owners must notify Council of the existence of a pool, and ensure all requirements in terms of fencing materials, height, structures, gates and surrounds are met. If not, a swimming pool may not be filled with water.

Council encourages pool owners to annually inspect swimming pools and surrounding areas to ensure compliance, and to promptly attend to any safety maintenance. If you are unsure, Building Control Officers are available to conduct pool inspections for a small fee. Please contact a Customer Support team member to make an appointment.

What are Council's pool fencing requirements?

- All materials and components of a fence must be durable, and should be erected so that a child may not climb over or crawl under the fence from the outside.
- Fences must extend a minimum of 1.2 metres above the ground around the pool and any pool projections. (Pool projections also include objects permanently placed on the ground within 1.2 metres of the fence, and trees). Such materials must be fixed at the top or bottom or be of such a nature that the fence cannot be readily climbed by children under the age of six years.
- If a fence is to be constructed of perforated material, netting or mesh which has a dimension greater than 10mm, the fence must extend 1.8 metres above ground level or pool projections. The maximum size opening of any perforated material, netting or mesh, excluding circumference or perimeter is 50mm. This includes diagonal measurements.
- Any gaps between the bottom of the fence or gate and ground level should not exceed 100mm.

The spacing between adjacent vertical poles, panels or other posts should not exceed 100mm at any point.

- All fencing supports, nails, rods, wires, bracing or other similar posts must be on the inside of the fence, so they are not able to be climbed up from the outside. Horizontal rails should be at least 900mm apart.
- Gates must not open into the pool area, and must be fitted with automatic, child proof, self closing and

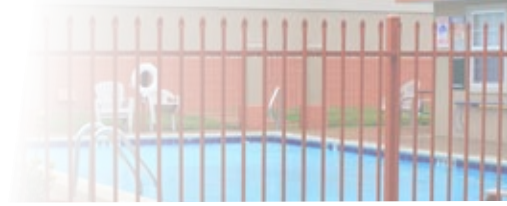
latching devices. The latching device should be mounted on the inside of the gate 1.2 metres above ground level or on the outside of the gate at 1.5 metres above ground level.

- The immediate pool area must not contain vegetable gardens, clotheslines, children's sand pits, slides, swings etc.
- The fence should be situated, where possible, to prevent children moving directly to the pool from the house.

What are the requirements if doors open directly onto a pool area?

Doors that provide direct access to a pool area must open outwards from the pool area, and be fitted with self closing and latching devices. The latch must not be less than 1.5 metres above floor level.

Alternatively an automatic pool cover may be used in conjunction with an alarm system to detect unauthorised access into the pool area.



For existing pools, where Council may deem it impossible or unreasonable to have compliant doors, Council may, at its discretion, permit current doors to be approved provided they are fitted with a locking device that prevents the door being readily opened by children under the age of six years.

What about water supply?

The Building Code, and Council's Water Supply Bylaw have requirements relating to back flow prevention and metering of council water supply.

The Building Code requires that the water supply

system be installed so that there is no likelihood of cross-contamination between potable and non-potable supplies. This requires the installation of a backflow prevention device; the minimum requirement being an atmospheric vacuum breaker fitted to the hose tap used to fill the pool.

The Water Supply Bylaw requires that properties with a swimming pool capacity of 10m³ or more be fitted with a water meter. Applications for a water meter should be made to Council, and the cost if the installation is to be paid by the property owner at the time of the application.

Owners Checklist

Height of fencing is not less than 1.2m	
Maximum gap between fences/gates and ground is 100mm	
Maximum gap between vertical cladding is 100mm	
Spacing between horizontal rails is 900mm	
Mesh or netting gaps are no bigger than 10mm (1.2m fence) or 50mm (1.8m fence)	
Gate opens outwards	
Gate latches automatically	
Gate latches are self-locking	
Ranch sliders have top bolts	
Above ground pools have smooth vertical sides that are not less than 1.2m high	
Steps are removable to semi permanent structures (eg Para pools)	
Backflow preventer fitted to water supply	
Pool is registered with Council	

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