

Safety barriers for private swimming and spa pools in excluded areas

This document provides guidance to owners of existing private swimming and spa pools (swimming pools) that are located in areas of the State that are excluded from certain safety barrier and inspection requirements.

All new swimming pools, regardless of location in the State, that contain a depth of water of more than 30cm are required to have safety barriers that comply with the applicable building standard, restricting access of young children to the swimming pool area, on completion of the building work for the private swimming or spa pool.

Existing swimming pools are required to have safety barriers that are compliant with, and maintained to, the specified building standard. Local governments monitor the compliance of these safety barriers at maximum four-year intervals. However, existing swimming pools located in certain areas of the State – typically regional or remote areas outside of townsites – are not subject to these additional requirements.

Preventing drowning of young children

Drowning is a leading cause of accidental death for children under the age of five (young children), with most deaths occurring in swimming pools.

Safety barriers are essential in the prevention and reduction of the drowning deaths of young children in swimming pools. Other factors include adult supervision, CPR and first aid skills, and swimming and water safety education.

While active adult supervision is the best method to prevent child drownings, it is recognised that supervision may not always be feasible. Safety barriers are a proven effective secondary safety measure when supervision fails.

Safety barriers are intended to restrict the access of young children to the pool area from habitable buildings on the property, as well as from the street and neighbouring properties.

Safety barriers should comply with building standards. Guidance can be found in Building and Energy's Rules for Pools and Spas publication.

Building and Energy strongly encourage the installation and maintenance of safety barriers to existing swimming pools regardless of where they are located.



Important:

Regardless of whether your swimming pool is located in an excluded area or not, if it doesn't have an effective safety barrier your local government may consider your swimming pool to be in a dangerous state and issue a building order to install a safety barrier. Failure to comply with a building order can result in significant penalties.

More information?

More information is available from your [local government](#) and from www.demirs.wa.gov.au/rules-for-pools

A list of areas that require safety barriers for swimming pools can be found in Schedule 5 of the [Building Regulations 2012](#). Areas not listed are excluded.

The voluntary provision of safety barriers to swimming pools located in excluded areas was part of a recommendation by the Ombudsman WA in its report [Investigation into ways to prevent or reduce deaths of children by drowning](#)



Disclaimer – The information contained in this fact sheet is provided as general information and a guide only. It should not be relied upon as legal advice or as an accurate statement of the relevant legislation provisions. If you are uncertain as to your legal obligations, you should obtain independent legal advice.

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