

FACT SHEET 4

POOL & SPA SAFETY

While pools and spas are there to be enjoyed by the whole family, they are especially tempting to young children. Every pool and spa must have a safety barrier and every child must be supervised at all times.

A pool is just like any other type of playground or exercise equipment. Owners can enjoy the benefits, but they need to be safety conscious at all times.

SAFETY BARRIERS

Swimming pool regulations require that all swimming pools and spas must be fenced. Fences must be at least 1.2 m high and separate the pool from residential buildings and neighbouring properties. Gates must be self-closing and self-latching, and open away from the pool.

Remember:

- Fencing requirements must be met before a pool can be filled
- Fencing and gates should be checked periodically and maintained so they continue to satisfy the regulations
- Never leave furniture or other items near your pool fence or above ground pool. Children are climbers!

COVERS

Pool covers are not meant to stop children getting into the pool. Rigid covers may provide an effective barrier, but they are not totally child proof. Soft covers can give the illusion of being solid, but they will sag and create a pond deep enough to be dangerous to a child.

Never leave the cover partially over the pool when the pool is in use. A child may not be seen if trapped under the cover.

Remember: pool covers should never be considered a substitute for a safety barrier or proper supervision.

SPASA SA SAFETY GUIDELINES

While swimming pools allow us to get together with our friends and family to share fun, fitness and relaxation, they also pose a safety risk. But there are some easy-to-remember rules, which should keep everyone safe.

SPASA SA's guidelines are to:

- Supervise children at all times around water. If you need to leave the pool or water area, even for a moment, take children with you.
- Make sure your pool and spa fencing complies with all regulations and that the gate locks are childproof. Remember: a swimming pool fence is no substitute for supervision.
- Never leave furniture or other items on which children can climb near your pool fence.
- Make sure that drain or suction points are properly covered, mindful that hair, bathing suit tassels or parts of the body could become entangled.
- Display a resuscitation chart on your pool fence and take a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) course so you will know what to do in an emergency.
- Familiarise children with water by taking them to swimming lessons at the local pool.
- Make sure paddling pools, baths, basins and sinks and troughs are emptied when not in use.
- Never take your eyes off children when they are in or around water. It only takes a few seconds for a child to drown.
- Place 'No Diving' signs prominently around your pool, as most backyard pools are too shallow for diving.
- Be aware that poorly designed pools can create an entrapment hazard. Get a licensed pool builder to do a safety check.
- Never put your head under water when in a spa.
- Store chemicals in a cool dry place; out of the reach of children; never mix chemicals; and never add water to chemicals, only chemicals to water.

For more information go to the SPASA SA website www.spasasa.com.au