

The Great Unknown Danger About Unsafe Pool Drains



One of the greatest dangers in and around the pools and spas is unsuspecting swimmers being entrapped by pool or spa drains. Especially if pools' drains are improperly maintained or have faulty covers. As such, hair, jewelry or even limbs can get tangled or suctioned in the drain. The force of drain's suction can entrap the strongest adults, in fact, even good swimmers can drown or suffer catastrophic injuries.

CALIFORNIA LAW (SB442)

A new California law known as the Pool Safety Act (SB442) has been signed by Governor Brown and became effective on January 1, 2018.

The law requires new or remodeled pools and spas to have two of seven child protective safety barriers.

While existing pools and spas are not required to add additional safety barriers, the California Real Estate Inspection Association (CREIA) suggests when it comes to protecting our young and vulnerable, all pools and spas should have 2 of the 7 appropriate safety barriers identified in the Pool Safety Act as well as a perimeter fence that separates the property from neighboring properties, as follows:

A PROPER POOL OR SPA FENCE THAT SEPARATES YOUR POOL OR SPA FROM THE HOME.

A perimeter fence or An enclosure with a minimum height of 60 inches, with the access gates through the enclosure opening away from the pool or spa that are self-closing, self-latching, and shall be no lower than 60 inches above the ground, and where the bottom is 2 inches above ground with no gaps or voids, which could allow passage of a 4-inch sphere.

The above described pool or spa fence should not be easily climbable by any person, especially children.

A REMOVABLE MESH FENCE.

A removable mesh fence that provides 360 degrees of protection for the pool / spa from the private single-family home. The top of the fence must be at least 48 inches high. Hinged gates, must be self closing, self-latching, open outward from the pool or spa and accommodate a locking device 54 inches above grade on the outside of the gate and latching devices, which secure each barrier section shall be no lower than 45 inches above grade and provide security equal or greater than the hook-and-eye-type latch with a spring retaining lever.

A MANUALLY OR AUTOMATED SAFETY POOL COVER.

The requirements for pool covers are too detailed and specific to list in this brochure. If a manual or power pool cover is present. A licensed pool/spa contractor should be employed to perform an evaluation and provide you with an expert opinion.

EXIT ALARMS ON DOORS, WINDOWS & PET ACCESS.

Exit alarms on doors and windows that provide direct access to the swimming pool or spa. The exit alarms are required on all doors that lead to the pool/spa.

A SELF-CLOSING, SELF-LATCHING DEVICE.

A self-closing, self-latching device that prevents direct access to the swimming pool or spa. A self-closing, self latching device with a release mechanism placed no lower than 54 inches above the floor on all doors that provide direct access to the pool/spa.

POOL AND SPA ALARM.

Install pool and spa alarms that will sound upon detection of accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water. A pool and spa alarm that detects surface motion or by pressure, sonar, laser, and/or infrared.

Note: Alarms not approved are alarms designed for individual use, including an alarm attached to a child that sounds when the child exceeds a certain distance or becomes submerged in water.

OTHER MEANS OF PROTECTION.

If the degree of protection afforded is equal to or greater than that afforded by any of the features set forth above and has been independently verified by an approved testing laboratory as meeting standards for those features established by the ASTM or the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME).

ADDITIONAL STEPS TO SAFER POOL / SPA.

- Avoid dangerous drains and watch for non-compliant, loose, missing or broken drain covers.
- Before swimming, tie up long hair securely or wear a swim cap to help prevent entanglement.
- Warn children to stay away from drains and other openings to avoid entrapment.
- Teach children to swim, float, tread water and get in and out of the pool safely.

Contents from sources - Courtesy of CREIA, Abbey's Hope Charitable Foundation