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Building & Safety Division

POOL DROWNING PREVENTION

2016 California Building Code, section 3109 | California Senate Bill No. 442

Swimming pools or spas shall be equipped with at least **TWO** of the following seven drowning prevention safety features:

- 1) An enclosure that meets the requirements of Section 115923 and isolates the swimming pool or spa from the private single-family home (*see below for enclosure requirements*).
- 2) Removable mesh fencing that meets American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) Specifications F2286 standards in conjunction with a gate that is self-closing and self-latching and can accommodate a key lockable device.
- 3) An approved safety pool cover, as defined in subdivision (d) of Section 115921.
- 4) Exit alarms on the private single-family home's doors that provide direct access to the swimming pool or spa. The exit alarm may cause either an alarm noise or a verbal warning, such as a repeating notification that "the door to the pool is open."
- 5) A self-closing, self-latching device with a release mechanism placed no lower than 54 inches above the floor on the private single-family home's doors providing direct access to the swimming pool or spa.
- 6) An alarm that, when placed in a swimming pool or spa, will sound upon detection of accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water. The alarm shall meet and be independently certified to the ASTM Standard F2208 "Standard Safety Specification for Residential Pool Alarms," which includes surface motion, pressure, sonar, laser, and infrared type alarms. A swimming protection alarm feature 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, is not a qualifying drowning prevention safety feature.
- 7) 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 Pool Notes

- i. "Non Climb" animal fencing is not an acceptable means of enclosing a pool unless it meets all CBC requirements.
- ii. All suction outlets in new pools or modifications to existing pools shall be equipped with antientrapment grates per ANSI/APSP-16. CBC 3109.4.4.8, items 4 & 6.

Enclosure Requirements for Private Swimming Pools

- A. Enclosures shall be a minimum of 60 inches high, measured on the side of the barrier that faces away from the swimming pool. CBC 3109.4.4.3, item 2
- B. Maximum vertical clearance from ground to bottom of enclosure shall be 2 inches. CBC 3109.4.4.3, item 3
- C. Enclosure gaps or voids shall not allow the passage of a 4" diameter sphere. CBC 3109.4.4.3, item 4
- D. Access gates through the enclosure shall:
 - a. Open away from the swimming pool
 - b. Be self-closing
 - c. Have a self-latching device placed at least 60 inches above the ground. CBC 3109.4.4.3, item 1
- E. The enclosure shall be free of any characteristics that would enable a child below the age of five to climb over per CBC 3109.4.4.3, item 5:
 - a. **Closely spaced horizontal members:** If the tops of horizontal members are less than 45 inches apart, then vertical member spacing shall not exceed 1 3/4 inches. CBC 3109.4.1.3
 - b. **Widely spaced horizontal members:** If the tops of horizontal members are 45 inches apart or more, then vertical member spacing shall not exceed 4 inches. CBC 3109.4.1.4
 - c. **Diagonal members:** Openings formed by diagonals shall not exceed 1 3/4 inches. CBC 3109.4.1.6

