



Swimming Pool Safety

Knowing the Guidelines Can Save Lives

Pioneer State Mutual Insurance Company

Having a swimming pool can make you one of the most popular neighbors on the block. While enjoying the cool water on a warm day can be refreshing and fun for people of all ages, it's very important pool owners understand how to keep their family and friends safe around the water. Here are a couple reminders to help keep your family and visitors safe around the pool:

Keep your pool area fenced in, and lock it when you are not using it.

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPCS) performed a study on pool drowning accidents. The results were astonishing and horrifying. Children are particularly vulnerable to swimming pool accidents as toddlers wander into the pool, neighborhood kids swim without permission and/or children fall into the pool area when unsupervised. So, it is mandatory for pools to have the proper fencing. In its Safety Barrier Guidelines, the [CPCS](#) states,

“a successful pool barrier prevents a child from getting OVER, UNDER, or THROUGH and keeps the child from gaining access to the pool except when supervising adults are present.... The guidelines recommend that the top of a pool barrier be at least 48 inches above grade, measured on the side of the barrier which faces away from the swimming pool... Guidelines recommend eliminating handholds and footholds and minimizing the size of openings in a barrier's construction... For a Solid Barrier: No indentations or protrusions should be present, other than normal construction tolerances and masonry joints... For a Barrier (Fence) Made Up of Horizontal and Vertical Members: If the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is less than 45 inches, the horizontal members should be on the swimming pool side of the fence. The spacing of the vertical members should not exceed 1-3/4 inches. This size is based on the foot width of a young child and is intended to reduce the potential for a child to gain a foothold. If there are any decorative cutouts in the fence, the space within the cutouts should not exceed 1-3/4 inches.”

Always monitor children in the pool area.

May 2014 was named “National Water Safety Month.” This consumer organization's [website](#) offers numerous tips on how to keep the pool area safe. Some of the advice includes to:

“appoint a ‘designated watcher’ to monitor children during social gatherings at or near pools.... Equip doors and windows that exit to a pool area with alarms. Keep rescue equipment poolside. Don't wait for the paramedics to arrive because you will lose valuable life-saving seconds. Four to six minutes without oxygen can cause permanent brain damage or death.... Don't leave objects such as toys that might attract a child in the pool and pool area.”

Having a pool can be fun, but it is also a very big responsibility. It is vital for pool owners to know these guidelines in order to keep their family and visitors safe.

