



# SWIMMING POOL FENCING REQUIREMENTS CHECKLIST

## GENERAL INFORMATION

Local Councils in Western Australia are currently required to carry out four yearly inspections on each premise with a below ground swimming pool, above ground pool and/or spa, to check that the pool fencing and pool gates continue to comply with the swimming pool fencing requirements.

As an owner or occupier of a premise containing a swimming pool or spa you have an obligation to maintain the pool fencing and pool gates to restrict the access of young children to swimming pools and spas.

There have been several changes to the swimming pool fencing legislation over the last few years. As a result different rules apply to pools and spas depending on the date a building licence was issued and the pool installed.

The following checklist is a guideline for owners and occupiers to ensure the pool fencing and gates remain in compliance with the swimming pool legislation.

The Shire of Coorow keeps a database of all approved swimming pools and spas within its district. If you are unsure whether your pool fence meets requirements, please contact Council staff on 9953 1388 who will be able to provide advice.

### FOR ALL SWIMMING POOLS:

1. The pool fencing/walls should:
  - be at least 1.2m high.
  - not have gaps in the fence or below the fence wider than 100mm.
  - not have footholds, handholds or other means for a young child to be able to climb.
  - have no items such as outdoor furniture, BBQ's, bikes, pot plants, gym equipment, ladders, trees and shrubs with low branches, garden trellis or other items located within 1.2m of the pool gates.
  
2. All swimming pool gates should:
  - be self-closing from any point of release without applying manual force.
  - have the latch release located more than 1.5 metres above the ground or in a position where it
  - cannot be operated by a young child.
  - be at least 1.2m high.
  - not have gaps in the gate or below the gate greater than 100 mm.
  - not have footholds, hand-holds or other means for a young child to be able to climb.
  - have no items such as outdoor furniture, BBQ's, bikes, pot plants, gym equipment, ladders, trees and shrubs with low branches, garden trellis and other items located within 1.2m.

- Double gates, roller doors and tilt up doors are not permitted to form part of the pool fencing enclosure.
  - Padlocks and keyed locks are not permitted devices to secure gates.
3. The skimmer box should be fitted with a safety device to prevent children using the skimmer box as a seat.

### **FOR POOLS INSTALLED AFTER 1989 (ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS)**

4. All swimming pool gates are to open outwards, away from the pool area.

### **FOR POOLS INSTALLED AFTER 1992 (ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS)**

5. If the swimming pool enclosure includes a wall that contains a door or window which permits access to the pool enclosure, it should be secured according to Australian Standard AS1926.1 as follows:

#### **Child Resistant Doorset Requirements**

The doors should be fitted with self-latching devices that will automatically operate on the closing of the door and will prevent the door from being reopened without manually releasing the device.

The doors should be fitted with self-closing devices that will return the door to the closed position and operate the latching device from any position with a stationary start, without applying manual force.

The release for the latching device on the internal (building) side of the door shall be located not less than 1.5m above the floor.

There should be no footholds wider than 10mm on the door or its frame in the area from the release for the latching device down to 100mm above the floor.

#### **NOTE:**

*Sliding doors are not excluded as being child resistant; however it may not be possible to fit self-closing and self-latching devices to all designs of sliding doors.*

*In most circumstances allowing direct access to the pool area from a building, even via child-resistant doorsets, compromises safety, as the Doorset may be treated as a normal door and not maintained as a purpose-built safety device to form a barrier that will consistently restrict the access of young children to the swimming pool. Accordingly this option should only be used with caution and primarily only where physical circumstances preclude any other acceptable solution.*

*Council encourages the construction of an isolation fence for the safety of young children.*

#### **Child-Resistant Openable Portion of Window**

Where the height from the sill of the lowest opening panel of the window to the pool surround is less than 2.4m, the openable portion of the window shall comply with one of the following requirements:

Where the height from the sill of the lowest opening panel of a window to the floor is not greater than 900mm then the openable portion of the window shall be totally covered by bars or a mesh screen. The bars or mesh screen shall be fixed to the building with fasteners that can only be removed by the use of a tool eg a key, screwdriver or spanner.

*NOTE: Covering a window with bars or mesh screen limits exit from the building in an emergency and hinders rescuers from entering the building.*

Where the height from the sill of the lowest opening panel of a window to the floor is greater than 900mm but not greater than 1200mm, then the openable portion of the window shall comply with the above or shall be fitted with a securely fixed flyscreen.

### **FOR POOLS INSTALLED ON OR AFTER 5 NOVEMBER, 2001**

6.

Under the new legislation new pools installed on or after 5th November 2001 or pools for which the plans, drawings and specifications were submitted to the local government for approval on or after 5 November 2001 are not able to have a self-closing, self-latching door opening on to the pool area.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS CHECKLIST IS A GUIDE ONLY. FURTHER INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED BY CONTACTING THE MANAGER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ON 9953 1388.**

**REMEMBER: THE POOL FENCING REQUIREMENTS ARE DIRECTED AT PREVENTING A YOUNG CHILD FROM GAINING ACCESS TO A POOL AREA. THE NEED FOR CONSTANT SUPERVISION OF CHILDREN NEAR A POOL BY AN ADULT IS ESSENTIAL.**

