



**BROWARD COUNTY  
BOARD OF RULES AND APPEALS**

# **POOL SAFETY INFORMATION**

**SEPTEMBER 2024**

## FLORIDA POOL STATISTICS AND RULES

- Drowning is the leading cause of death among Florida children between the ages of 1-4.
- Drowning is a significant cause of death for medically frail elderly people in Florida.
- Approximately 66% of all drownings occur in residential pools.
- By state law and the Florida Building Code, all new residential pools finished, effective October 1, 2000, require safety barriers.
- Barriers must be able to prevent a young child from crawling under or squeezing through barriers to gain access to the pool.
- The gate latch must be located 54" above the bottom of the gate.
- In addition to these measures, pool safety experts remind us that supervision of children and emergency preparedness are essential to pool safety.



Pool barriers that can lessen the chance of an accidental drowning.



## **AREAS THAT DESERVE SPECIAL ATTENTION:**

- Make sure the bottom of all pool ladders maintain a tight fit to the pool wall.
- Make sure all doors leading directly to the pool area are self-closing and self-latching with release mechanisms located a minimum of 54 inches above the walking surface if the doors from inside the residence do not have alarms.
- Make sure all gates and screen doors leading to the pool area from the yard are self-closing and self-latching.
- Diving equipment shall have slip-resistant walking surfaces.



## **WAS YOUR POOL COMPLETED BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2000? CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING THESE NEW REQUIREMENTS OF POOL SAFETY:**

- Add a yard fence, no shorter than 4 feet high, with self-closing and self-latching gates that swing out away from the pool area.
- Install an approved pool cover, pool net, or child safety fence that is in place at all times when the pool is not being supervised.
- Install pool alarms on all operable windows and doors having direct access to the pool area to alert you if anyone exits the residence in the direction of the pool.

## **WHAT IS ELECTROCUTION?**

Electrocution is death by an electrical shock. When electricity is present, wet skin or wet surfaces, such as grass or a pool deck, can greatly increase the chance of electrocution.

## **WHERE IS ELECTRICITY FOUND AROUND POOLS, HOT TUBS AND SPAS?**

- Under water lights and handrails
- Electric pool equipment (pumps, filters, vacuums, etc.)
- Electrical outlets or switches
- Radios, stereos, TV's and electronic devices
- Overhead power lines
- Pool decks

## **SWIMMERS' ELECTRICAL SHOCK SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:**

- Swimmers may feel a tingling sensation, experience muscle cramps, and not be able to move
- Panicking
- Lack of movement in swimmers

## **DANGEROUS ITEMS TO LOOK FOR:**

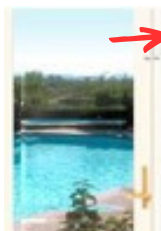
- Discolored light fixtures
- Broken or rusted electrical boxes and transformers
- Loose, broken, or unattached wiring around pool equipment, screening, and decking
- Broken switch or receptacle plates in the pool area
- Overhead power lines

A MESSAGE FROM BORA'S CHIEF  
ELECTRICAL CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER

## ELECTRICAL DO'S AND DON'TS:

- Locate and label all power switches to be turned off in case a shock occurs
- Install GFCI receptacles around the pool and test them yearly
- Have a fiberglass rescue hook nearby for rescue purposes
- Install pool alarms to alert you if anyone exits the home in the direction of the pool area
- Take a CPR course
- Never swim alone
- Do not use electrical extension cords around pools
- Do not touch anything electrical when you are wet
- Do not allow an unqualified person to work on or around your pool
- Do not use cord-connected electronic or electric devices near the pool (i.e., radio)

A fiberglass rescue hook that can be used to save a swimmer in distress



A door alarm that sounds when the door/ window is opened

**CAUTION:** It is recommended that you change the pool light fixture voltage from 120 volts to low voltage. The Board of Rules and Appeals amended our local code for new construction so that the voltage for lighting in and surrounding pool areas shall not exceed 15 volts.

**A MESSAGE FROM BORA'S CHIEF  
PLUMBING CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER**

Every pool owner should become familiar with pool main drains, skimmers, or vacuum pool fittings.

**5 TYPES OF SUCTION ENTRAPMENT:**

- **Hair Entrapment:** Hair knotted or snagged in an inlet cover
- **Limb Entrapment:** A limb inserted or drawn into an inlet opening with a broken or missing cover, resulting in a mechanical bind or swelling
- **Body Swelling Entrapment:** Suction applied to a large portion of the body, resulting in entrapment
- **Evisceration/Disembowelment:** Suction applied directly to the intestines through an unprotected sump or suction with a missing or broken cover
- **Mechanical Entrapment:** Jewelry, swimsuit, hair decoration, fingers, toes, etc., caught in the opening of an inlet cover



Child survivor of main drain body entrapment

Hair can be sucked into a main drain, become tangled in the drain cover and difficult to free the swimmer



## **RECOMMENDED WAYS TO CORRECT A HAZARDOUS SITUATION FROM DEDICATED MAIN DRAIN LINES:**

- Install a Vacuum Safety Release System
- Install Dual Main Drains
- Install an approved main drain cover that meets the American National Standards Institute (ANSI/APSP/ICC 7) for pools with one main drain

**Depending on your pool or spa,  
multiple methods may be required.**

Pool  
vacuum  
lock safety  
wall fitting



Main  
drain  
cover

## **Other areas for potential suction danger are the vacuum line for pool cleaners and wall skimmers**

- The vacuum line should have a self-closing, self-latching fitting when it is not in use.
- In most above-ground and in-ground pools and spas, there is a wall skimmer that draws water out of the pool or spa to clear waste from pool water.
- The skimmer has a protective basket that sits on top of the actual intake at the bottom of the skimmer.
- It is very common for someone to remove the basket for cleaning and forget to put it back in the skimmer, creating a dangerous environment for suction.
- Skimmer lids should have vent holes.
- Pool piping shall be designed so that the water velocity will not exceed 10 feet per second for pressure piping and 8 feet per second for suction piping.

Additional information may be obtained at the following websites:

**Water Smart Broward**  
watersmartbroward.org

**Red Cross**  
redcross.org

**Consumer Product Safety Commission**  
cpsc.gov

- There is no substitution for child supervision. Drowning happens quickly and silently. A drowning child does not scream, splash, or struggle. Supervise children when they are near any body of water.
- Contact a licensed electrical contractor to inspect the electrical safety of your pool.
- Contact a licensed pool contractor to inspect for pool safety issues not related to electrical concerns.

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