

# Residential Pool Safety Notice

## AN IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT POOL SAFETY

The purpose of this notice is to educate residential pool\* owners on proper pool safety and the legal requirements of pool ownership. Each year in Arizona, too many young children are victims of drownings or near drownings. The Arizona State Legislature recognized this threat to the health and safety of children and passed A.R.S. § 36-1681 to prevent children from gaining unsupervised access to residential swimming pools. In A.R.S. § 36-1681(E), the Legislature also requires that all pool owners receive a safety notice explaining the Arizona Department of Health Services recommendations on pool safety and the legal requirements of pool ownership.

## ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES POOL SAFETY RECOMMENDATIONS

- A child should never be left unattended in the pool or pool area.
- A child should always be watched when in or around the pool area. Floatation devices and swimming lessons are not substitutes for supervision.
- CPR instructions and the 911 emergency number should be posted in the pool area.
- All residential pool owners should attend water rescue and CPR classes.
- Lifesaving equipment should be easily accessible and stored in the pool area.
- A phone should be located in the pool area or easily accessible in case of an emergency.
- All gate locks and latches should be checked regularly to insure they are working properly.
- A gate should never be left propped open.
- All items that could be used to climb a pool barrier should be removed from around the barrier.

## POOL ENCLOSURE REQUIREMENTS

A.R.S. § 36-1681 requires that all residential swimming pools are enclosed by a barrier. Unless a local code\*\* provides otherwise, the barrier must:

- Entirely enclose the pool area,
- Be at least 5 feet high,
- Not have openings, handholds, or footholds that can be used to climb the barrier,
- Have no openings through which an object 4 inches in diameter can pass,
- Be at least 20 inches from the water's edge, and
- Prevent direct access from the house to the pool.

If the wall of the residence forms part of the pool enclosure, there must be:

- A barrier at least 4 feet high between the residence and the pool, or
- A motorized safety pool cover that requires a key switch and meets the American Society of Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards in F1346-91

(<http://www.astm.org/>), or

- Self-latching devices on all doors with direct access to the pool, and
- Self-latching devices at least 54 inches above the floor on all emergency or rescue windows with direct access to the pool or pool area, and
- For all other openable windows with access to the pool or pool area:
  1. Screwed in place wire mesh screens or a keyed lock that prevents opening a window more than 4 inches, or
  2. Self-latching devices at least 54 inches above the floor.

### **GATE REQUIREMENTS**

A.R.S. § 36-1681(B)(3) requires that all gates for the pool enclosure be:

1. Self-closing,
2. Self-latching, and
3. Open outward from the pool.

The latches must be:

1. Located at least 54 inches above the ground; or
2. If on the pool side with a release mechanism,
  - a. Located at least 5 inches below the top of the gate, and
  - b. So that no opening greater than ½ inch is within 24 inches of the release mechanism; or
3. Secured at any height if secured by a padlock or similar device which requires a key, electronic opener, or integral combination.

### **ABOVEGROUND POOLS**

A.R.S. § 36-1681 (C)(4) requires that the exterior sides of an aboveground pool are non-climbable and a minimum of 4 feet high. Any access ladder or steps must be secured and locked or removed when the pool is not in use.

### **REMEMBER**

1. Supervision is the only way to prevent drownings.
2. Never leave a child unattended in the water or pool area.
3. And always watch a child when in the water or pool area.

### **IN AN EMERGENCY:**

1. Shout for help.
2. Pull the child from the water.
3. Call 911 (or the local emergency number) for help

4. Check airway and breathing. If needed, start CPR immediately.

---

\* "Pool" means an in-ground or aboveground swimming pool or other contained body of water 18 or more inches in depth, wider than 8 feet at any point, and intended for swimming, pursuant to A.R.S. § 36-1681(A).

\*\* Phoenix, Peoria, Tucson, and some other cities and unincorporated areas of Maricopa, Pima, and Pinal Counties have different pool barrier requirements. Check with your city and county governments to see if they have adopted different pool barrier requirements.

Last modified on August 15, 2001

Copyright 2001, AZ Department of Health Services.

All rights reserved.

General comments, questions, or concerns: [ADHS Webmaster](#)