SWIMMING POOL FENCING REQUIREMENTS

Swimming pools

A pool is any structure or product containing water over 400mm deep that is used or capable of being used for swimming, wading, paddling or bathing, and includes spa and inflatable pools. All pools must be fenced following the guidelines required under the Building Code clause F9.

A building consent from Council is required for the installation of pools that don't meet the requirements of exempt work under Schedule 1 of the Building Act. Even though certain swimming pools don't require a building consent the pool fencing/barrier may still require building consent approval.

It is crucial that you contact the Building Control Team to find out if you need a consent.

Swimming pool fencing/restriction guidelines

The Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987 (FOSPA) has been repealed and fences/ barriers are now covered under the Building Act 2004, specifically Building Code Clause F9.

Swimming and spa pools are part of our way of life in New Zealand. They provide wonderful opportunities for the whole family to gather together and have fun. As the pool owner, you're responsible for installing and maintaining pool fencing that is safe and effective.

Above-Ground Swimming Pools

No fence/barrier for an above-ground pool is required if the sides of the pool can be an effective barrier. Fencing/restrictions are not required if;

• The minimum height of the walls of the pool are 1.2m from the ground/finished floor level;

• The sides of the pool are smooth, so there is nothing that can be used as a foot-hold to climb into the interior of the pool;

• There are no permanent projections or objects that can be climbed or stepped on to get into the interior of the pool; and

• The ladder or means of getting in the pool is removed when the pool is not in use.

NOTE: All in-ground swimming pools, and above-ground swimming pools with sides less than 1.2m high, need a complying fence/barrier which requires Building Consent approval.

Swimming Pool Fencing and Restriction Information

The following is required in order to achieve a complying swimming pool fence/barrier (see Building Code clause F9 for more information)

1. The fence/barrier must not be less than 1.2m high measured from ground level.

2. Gates must open outward with no means provided to hold the gate open.

3. When lifted up or down the gate or door does not release the latch device or come off its hinges.

4. Gates must automatically latch, with latch 1.5m above ground level on outside, or 1.2m above ground level on the inside of gate or door.

5. Every gate or door in a pool fence shall be fitted with a device that will automatically return it to a closed position and operate the latch device when the gate is held at a distance of not more than 150mm from the closed position.

6. The fence/barrier must be clear of any permanent projection, or object placed on the ground within 1.2m of the fence/barrier on the outside, that can act as a step.

7. No horizontal rails with less than 900mm gap between the rails on the outside of the fence.

8. No gaps between vertical cladding to be more than 100mm wide.

9. No gaps under the fencing or gates to be more than 100mm wide.

10. Gaps in any perforated material (trellis, mesh or netting) are no wider than 10mm if the fence/barrier is 1.2m in height.

11. Gaps in any perforated material (trellis, mesh or netting) are no wider than 50mm if the fence/barrier is 1.8m in height.

12. If the fence is horizontally close boarded, the maximum gap between each board is 10mm.

13. Any windows that open into the pool area, lower than 1.2m from the inside floor level, must have restrictors on them limiting the opening to 100mm.

14. Any door in a building that provides direct access to the pool is self-closing and self-latching, or has an audible alarm.

15. The door's locking device or alarm deactivation switch is fitted at least 1.5m from floor level.

16. A suitable backflow preventer (vacuum breaker) fitted to the tap used for filling the pool.