

Pools are great fun and very tempting for curious children. Every pool must have a fence and every child must be supervised.

Pool fencing is required by legislation for any swimming pool or spa in excess of 300mm in depth and must be maintained for the life of the pool or spa.

The key elements of the relevant Australian Standard, A.S. 1926-2007 are designed to deny access by unsupervised young children, especially those under 5 years of age, to the swimming pool area.

FENCES

Essentially, a safety barrier fence can be made of any material that has a reasonable life span when exposed to the likely conditions of weather, pool chemicals, pollution, decay, insects, salt water spray, impacts, etc.

Fences must have an effective perpendicular minimum height of 1.2 metres. Existing standard paling fences can be used provided that they are well-maintained and at least 1800mm high. If the rails are on the outside of the pool area, a non climbable zone of 900mm from the top must be provided on the inside of the fence.

Ground clearance between the bottom of the fence and ground level is not to exceed 100mm, and any horizontal rails, rods, etc, which could assist climbing, should be on the pool side of the fence. If they're on the outside, they should be at least 900mm apart. The space between vertical members must not exceed 100mm.

GATES

These must open outward only and have an effective perpendicular minimum height of 1.2 metres.

They must return to the closed position and engage the latch automatically from any position and not re-open without using the manual release mechanism. The latch must be at least 1.5 metres above ground level unless it (i) is inside the fence (ii) can only be reached over or through a fence higher than 1.2 metres or (iii) is 150mm below the fence top (no hand hole) or at least 150mm away from the edge of any hand hole opening. Latches less than 1.5 metres above ground level must be shielded so that no opening greater than 10mm is closer than 450mm. Any hand hole shall be at least 1.2 metres above ground level.

WALLS

External walls of a building can be used as swimming pool barriers so long as they do not contain any doors opening into the pool enclosure and windows are treated to prevent access to the pool enclosure.

DOORS & WINDOWS

Doors from a dwelling are prohibited from opening into a swimming pool enclosure. The only exception is for doors opening to a swimming pool or spa within a building.

Acceptable window types are as follows:

- Those totally enclosed by grills with no openings through which a 100mm diameter sphere can pass.
- Those that will not open far enough to create a gap through which a 100mm diameter sphere can pass.
- Those with a lowest opening panel not less than 1.2 metres above the floor.
- Those that have firm fixed fly-wire installed.

This is only a general summary of A.S 1926.1. Please refer to A.S 1926.1-2007 for specific requirements, contact your local SPASA member or the Building Commission for more information.

