

Queensland's Current Pool and Spa Safety Standards

A guide for all pool and spa owners



ipswich.qld.gov.au/poolsafe



Are you meeting Queensland's current pool and spa safety standards?

The State Government's swimming pool and spa safety laws were implemented on 1 December 2010 across all council regions in Queensland to reduce childhood drowning and immersion injuries in swimming pools and spas.

Drowning is one of the leading causes of death for children under the age of five in Queensland.

A child or toddler can drown within 20 seconds, in as little as 50mm of water. A child drowning is silent.

Note, this information sheet provides a brief guide about the current Queensland Government's requirements regarding swimming pools and spa regulations.

All regulated swimming pools and spas in Queensland require a Building Approval and **must be** registered with the Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC).

DEFINITION OF A REGULATED SWIMMING POOL

The Queensland Building Act 1975 defines a Regulated Pool as:

231B What is a regulated pool

- (1) A regulated pool—
 - (a) is a swimming pool situated on regulated land; and
 - (b) includes the barriers for the pool.
- (2) The barriers for the pool include any of the following—
 - (a) the fencing for the pool;
 - (b) the walls of a building enclosing the pool;
 - (c) another form of barrier mentioned or provided for in the pool safety standard.

OWNER'S RESPONSIBILITY

Pool and spa safety laws require pool/spa owners to construct and maintain a compliant fence around their swimming pool/spa **regardless of when the pool/spa was installed**. Owners should regularly check the pool/spa fence is safe and make sure it is compliant with current standards. As a pool/spa owner you are required to ensure the pool/spa is correctly registered on the QBCC website (see qbcc.qld.gov.au).

POOL/SPA FENCING REGULATIONS

Requirements for pool/spa fencing include:

- The pool/spa fence needs to be a permanent structure
- The effective pool/spa fence height must be **not less than 1,200mm high from above the ground** and is to include a continuous non-climbable zone around the entire pool/spa fence (*QDC MP3.4 Swimming Pool Barriers*)
- All objects inside the pool/spa fence that may provide footholds should be moved a **minimum of 300mm** away from the fence
- Ensure there are **no climbable objects** such as furniture, trees, branches, shrubs, plants, pool toys or any other obstructions around the fence that a child can use to climb over the fence or open the gate to gain access to the pool/spa area
- The maximum distance under the pool/spa fence to the ground level is **not to exceed 100mm**
- The maximum gap anywhere in the pool/spa fence is **not to exceed 100mm**
- The gate latch is to be a **minimum of 1,500mm** when measured from the ground to the bottom of the latch
- The gate hinges to be **900mm apart**, from the top of the top hinge to the top of the lower hinge
- Pool/spa gates must be **closed at all times**
- Pool/spa gates need to **open outwards away** from the pool/spa area, and should be **self-closing and self-latching from all open positions - replace immediately** if it no longer self-latches

- Direct access from a dwelling into a pool/spa enclosure is **not** allowable. **All entry points to a pool/spa must be through an approved pool/spa gate**
- A building with windows and doors that open **more than 100mm** directly into a pool/spa enclosure must have a permanently fixed security screen fitted, so children are not able to access the pool/spa area.

See over for an example fencing diagram

NON-COMPLIANCE POOL/SPA FENCE

If a Pool Safety Inspector determines that a pool/spa fence does not comply, they **must** issue a *Pool Safety Non-Conformity Notice* to the pool owner (Form 26).

A Form 26 outlines the non-compliant items found and provides advice on how to rectify the items in order to meet compliant pool/spa fence safety standards.

ABOVE GROUND SWIMMING POOLS

The walls of an above ground pool may form part of a pool barrier if they are a **minimum of 1,200mm** above ground level and the sides **do not have any climbable objects** as defined within the non-climbable zone. (*QDC MP3.4 Swimming Pool Barriers*)

A designated access point must be provided including an enclosed compliant fence with a compliant self-closing and self-latching gate.

PORTABLE (INFLATABLE) WADING POOLS – NOT REQUIRING BUILDING APPROVAL OR FENCING

The *Queensland Building Act 1975* defines a portable wading pool as:

“portable wading pool” means that it:

- (a) is capable of being filled with water to a depth of **no more than 300mm**; and
- (b) has a volume of **no more than 2,000L**; and
- (c) has **no** filtration system.

DECOMMISSION/REMOVAL OF A SWIMMING POOL/SPA

If a swimming pool/spa is to be (or has been) decommissioned and/or removed, you will require a building approval and are required to contact the QBCC to inform them that there is no longer a swimming pool/spa on the property. QBCC may require further information as proof the pool/spa has been de-commissioned and/or removed from the property.

You may be required to contact council's SEAL Pool Safety Team for further information.

CPR SAFETY SIGNAGE

Did you know a child is **four** times more likely to survive a near drowning if parents/guardians or bystanders know CPR and it is performed immediately.

Knowing CPR can save lives. It is recommended that parents/guardians and pool/spa owners should be trained in CPR and have resuscitation skills.

It is a requirement that current CPR signage **must** be displayed clearly to anyone near your pool/spa. It should display the following and must:

- be attached to the barrier, or displayed near the pool/spa, and the sign is conspicuous and easily visible to anyone near the pool/spa
- be at least 300mm x 300mm in size
- be made of durable and weatherproof material
- each diagram or letter on the sign must be durable, legible and clearly visible.

For up to date information about CPR signage requirements, visit ipswich.qld.gov.au/poolsafe.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Queensland Building and Construction Commission (QBCC)

qbcc.qld.gov.au
poolsafety@qbcc.qld.gov.au
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Ipswich City Council's Pools, Spas and Safety Barriers (including links to relevant State acts and regulations)

ipswich.qld.gov.au/poolsafe

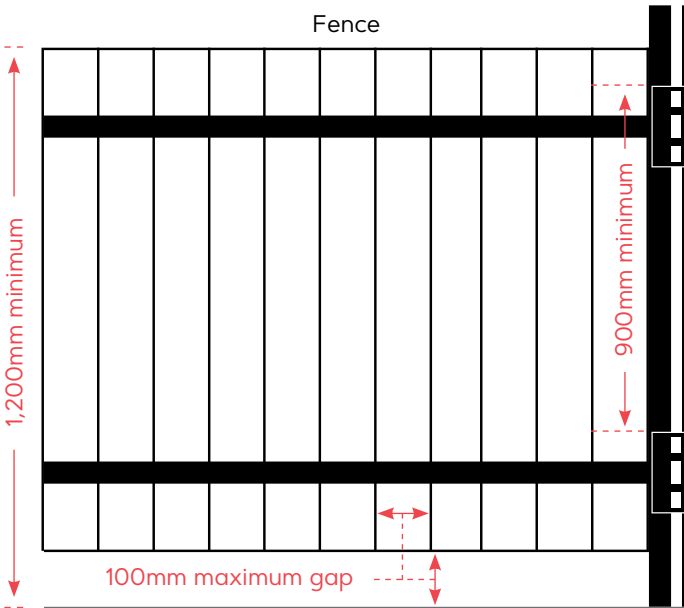
Ipswich City Council's SEAL pool safety program

ipswich.qld.gov.au/seal

Building Standards, Forms and Fact Sheets

ipswich.qld.gov.au/buildingstandards

For more information, please contact our friendly Pool Safety Team on (07) 3810 6120 or email poolsprogram@ipswich.qld.gov.au



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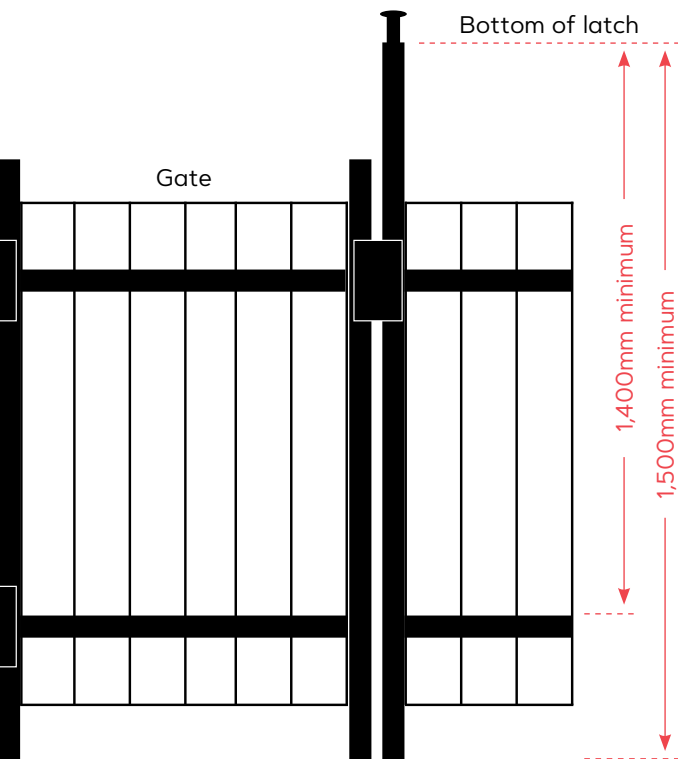


Diagram not to scale



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