Consumer Product Safety Alert

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

Swimming Pool Safety Alert

Each year, about 260 children under 5 drown in swimming pools. In addition, the suction from drains in swimming pools and spas, under certain conditions, can entrap swimmers underwater. To help protect your family, be sure to take the following steps.



Use Layers of Protection

To prevent swimming pool drownings, layers of protection are essential. Place barriers completely around the pool, closely supervise young children, and be prepared in case of emergency.

In addition:

- If a child is missing, always look first in the pool. Seconds count !
- Knowing how to swim doesn't make a child drown-proof. Never use flotation devices as a substitute for supervision.
- Keep rescue equipment and a phone next to the pool.
- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR).
- Install physical barriers around the pool to limit access.
  - Fences and walls should be at least 4-feet high and installed completely around the pool.
  - Gates should be self-closing and self-latching. The latch should be out of reach of small children.
- If your house forms one side of the barrier for the pool, doors leading from the house to the pool should be protected with alarms that sound when the doors are unexpectedly opened. Or, use a power safety cover, a motor-powered barrier placed over the water area, to prevent access by young children.
- For above-ground pools, steps and ladders to the pool should be secured or removed when the pool is not in use.

Pool and Spa Entrapment Dangers

- Never use a pool or spa with a missing or broken drain cover. Be sure a newer, safer drain cover is in place. The new drain covers are usually domed-shaped – instead of the old flat drain covers.
- Consider installing a Safety Vacuum Release System (SVRS) , a device that will automatically shut off a pump if a blockage is detected.
- Have a professional regularly inspect your pool or spa for entrapment or entanglement hazards.
- Plainly mark the location of the electrical cut-off switch for the pool or spa pump.
- If someone is entrapped against a drain, cut off the pump immediately. Instead of trying to pull the person away from the powerful suction, pry a hand between the drain and the person's body to break the seal.

For more information, please visit CPSC's Web site at www.cpsc.gov, or call the CPSC Hotline at (800) 638-2772.