



REGULATIONS COVERING

# Outdoor Swimming Pools and Spas

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INFORMATION  
BULLETIN

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The following requirements are for outdoor swimming pools, pools and spas for private use by the residents of a single family dwelling.

## What's considered a pool?

A swimming pool or pool means any structure intended for swimming or recreational bathing that contains water over 18" deep. This includes in-ground and above-ground structures and includes, but is not limited to, hot tubs, spas, portable spas and non-portable wading pools. Refer to Chapter 31B of the 2007 California Building Code.

## What kind of enclosure am I required to have?

A pool is required to have an enclosure that meets the requirements of Section 3118B of the 2007 California Building Code. The barriers must be installed, inspected and approved prior to plastering or filling the pool with water.

## Will any fence do?

No, the fence is one of the most important parts of the barrier and can cause many problems for people. A fence used for the swimming pool barrier has strict requirements. They are as follows:

***Please Note: All pools and/or spas must be fenced before they can be plastered and filled with water.***

1. The top of the barrier shall be a minimum of 60" inches above grade measured from the finish grade of the neighboring property.
2. Access gates through the enclosure must open away from the pool and shall be self-closing with a self-latching device placed no lower than 60" above the ground.
3. The maximum vertical clearance from the ground to the bottom of the enclosure is 2". The maximum vertical clearance at the bottom of the barrier may be increased to 4" when the grade is a solid surface, such as concrete.
4. Any gaps or voids in the fence shall be small enough as to prevent a sphere equal to or greater

- than 4" in diameter from passing thru it.
5. Any decorative design work on the side of the barrier facing away from the pool and/or spa, such as protrusions, indentations, or cutouts, which render the barrier easily climbable, shall be prohibited. These types of features could serve as handholds or footholds that could enable a child to climb over and gain access to the pool and/or spa.
6. If the fence has vertical members, there must be a minimum 45" or more between the horizontal members. The horizontal members must be placed on the side of the fence facing the pool and/or spa.
7. Chainlink fencing used as the barrier shall not be less than 11 gauge construction, and shall not have openings larger than 1 3/4" in width.
8. Any gates other than pedestrian access gates shall be equipped with lockable hardware.
9. Double-gates, such as an RV gate, shall have one side securely fastened in such a manner as to require a tool to open the fixed side. The non-fixed side shall comply with the pedestrian access gate requirements. Padlocks and deadbolts are unacceptable methods for securing double-gates.
10. All pedestrian access gates shall be installed so that they swing in the direction leading away from the pool and/or spa.
11. RV access gates are categorized as any gate that is over 60" wide. RV access gates must be securely fastened in such a manner as to require a tool to open them. Padlocks and deadbolts are unacceptable methods for securing RV access gates.

## What if I'm using part of my house as the enclosure?

The doors providing direct access from the home to the swimming pool shall be equipped with a self-closing, self-latching device with a release mechanism placed no lower than 54" above the floor or an alarm must be installed on all doors with direct access to the pool and/or spa. Otherwise you would need to isolate the pool from the house with additional fencing.

### **What kind of alarm is required?**

The alarm must activate within 7 seconds after the door and its screen, if present, are opened and shall sound continuously for a minimum of 30 seconds and then automatically reset. It should also be equipped with a manual reset located on the interior side of the wall not less than 54" above the threshold of the door in order to permit entry and exiting without activation of the alarm. The alarm can be battery operated or connected to the building wiring.

### **I'm only trying to protect my pool from people entering it, right?**

Actually, no. If any of your neighbors have a pool, the law requires that you protect persons in your yard from gaining access to their pool. Some areas of concern are decorative rocks, waterfalls, and similar fixtures that are located within the 5' setback. These such fixtures that could be used as a climbing device must be 3' away from the barrier. Even if your neighbors don't have a pool, it may be safe to plan ahead in the event a pool is installed.

### **Do all my windows and doors in the pool area have to be tempered?**

Not all, only glass that are less than 60" above the pool area and are within 5 feet of a pool shall be safety glazed.

### **What about all the receptacles, lights, and switches?**

Receptacles:

- ▶ Any receptacles installed must be a minimum of 10' from the inside wall of the pool.
- ▶ At least one receptacle must be installed between 10' and 20' from the inside of the wall of the pool and must be located not more than 6'6" above grade, if one does not already exist.
- ▶ All receptacles within 20' of the pool must be GFCI protected.

Light Fixtures:

- ▶ Can not be installed over the pool or within 5' from the inside wall of the pool.
- ▶ If a light fixture is located between 5' and 10' from the inside of the pool wall it must be protected by a ground-fault circuit interrupter unless it is

installed 5' above the water level.

Switches:

- ▶ All switches shall be located a minimum of 5' from the inside wall of the pool unless separated by a solid wall or barrier.

### **What if I have overhead wiring?**

Any overhead wiring within 10' of the inside wall of the pool shall be installed a minimum of 18' above the maximum water level and a minimum of 14' above any diving platform, slide, or other walking surface.

### **What are the required setbacks from the property line to the pool?**

Pools and spas are required to be a minimum of 5 feet from the property line on which the pool is located, and no closer than 3 feet to any other structure on the property.

### **Where can I put my pool equipment?**

Pool equipment must be 3' from the property line, however, there must be adequate working clearances around the pool equipment electrical panels. A clear area of 30" wide and 36" in front of the panel is required. The disconnect for this pool equipment must be installed a minimum of 5' from the inside wall of the pool and shall be in sight of the pool equipment. Any pool heater must be at least 4' from any operable window, door, or air inlet into the building.

### **What about other structures near the pool?**

All metal parts or components of accessory structures located within 5' of the inside wall of the pool shall be bonded to the pool equipment with a #8 solid, un-spliced copper wire.

### **What do I need to submit to the Building Department in order to get a permit?**

You need to submit

- ▶ One completed and signed Building permit application. *Note: that if you are a contractor we require a copy of the contract in order to verify valuation and get a permit.*
- ▶ Two sets of wet sealed and signed engineered plans. If you are using an ICBO plan then it

needs to be highlighted to indicate the sections that apply you your job site.

- ▶ Three sets of a plot plan. On this you need to provide the following:
  - Location of the pool on the property and the distance from all property lines. **Note:**  *Pools shall not be located in a front yard setback.*
  - Any existing or proposed structures.
  - Distances to any existing structures.
  - Locations of all openings (doors/windows) that open onto the pool area.
  - All accessories to the pool such as ladders, slides, diving boards, etc. that are proposed.
  - Locations of any existing electrical outlets, fixtures and new devices.
  - Layout and sizing of gas lines for heated pools and/or spas. We'll also need to know the BTU's of any proposed heaters.
  - Location and type of proposed pool equipment, electric and gas service.
  - Depths of all trenches for gas and electrical.
  - Details on fencing type, size and layout.

**Note: any gas line running under any structures must be sleeved with approved method.**

### **What inspections do I need to have?**

You will need the following inspections below:

- Bond
- U/G Electrical
- Rough Plumbing
- Pre-Gunite
- Gas Line
- Rough Electrical
- Fence and Gate
- Pre-Plaster
- Final

### **What is the first inspection to be performed?**

The first inspection will be the pre-gunite inspection. At this stage of the construction, the inspector will inspect the pool's structural steel, setbacks from property lines, the bonding of the structural steel and all metal within 5 feet of the pool, and the pool plumbing. Pool plumbing is required to be under 35 psi of water pressure during inspection.

### **When are the underground electrical and gas lines inspected?**

This inspection is performed when all electrical conduit and gas piping has been installed and is ready to be covered. PE gas pipe requires a burial depth of 18 inches minimum with a yellow #18 tracer wire installed next to the pipe. Metal gas piping requires a burial depth of 12 inches. Gas piping must be observed under a minimum of 10 psi air pressure during the inspection. The gas piping shall not be covered at any point until the inspector has approved installation. Electrical conduit is required to be buried at a depth of 18 inches. The electrical conduit shall not be covered at any point until approved by the inspector.

### **Is an inspection required before the pool can be plastered?**

Before the pool can be plastered all electrical work must be complete, the fencing and gates must be complete, and the door alarms or self-closing, self-latching hardware must be installed on exit doors leading to the pool area. The homeowner or contractor must demonstrate those devices to the inspector at this time.

### **Is an inspection required after the pool is plastered and filled with water?**

There will be a final inspection of the pool/spa. During this inspection the inspector will verify that all the required work has been completed and that the ground fault circuit interrupter, which is connected to the lighting circuit, is functioning properly. If you have a fuel burning heater, the California Energy Code requires that you have a pool cover for use when the pool is not occupied.