

# Swimming Pool Safety

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## Staying Safe in Pools and Spas

For millions of Americans, swimming pools and spas are great places for families to spend time together having fun. Yet it's important to ensure everyone stays safe in and around pools and spas.

To improve pool and spa safety, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) launched Pool Safely: Simple Steps to Save Lives, a national public education campaign to reduce child-

hood drowning, and entrapments.

The Pool Safely campaign carries out the provisions of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act (P&SS Act), federal legislation mandating new requirements for public pools and spas. The P&SSA Act directs CPSC to establish and

carry out a public education campaign.

Pool safety means adopting critical water safety steps to assure that a great afternoon at the pool doesn't turn into a tragic one. Whether at a residential or public pool or spa, everyone can always take additional steps to be safe while having fun.



Pool safety is easily attainable with the proper knowledge

## Safety Issues

Swimming pools and spas should always be happy places, yet each year many American families experience tragedies—drowning and non-fatal submersion injuries. Nearly all of these tragedies are

preventable, and you can help. There were, on average, 4,200 pool- or spa-related, emergency department-treated submersion injuries for children younger than 15 years of age between 2007 and 2009.

An unknown number of these hospitalizations resulted in permanent disability, including brain damage. Adding an extra safety step in and around the water can make all the difference.

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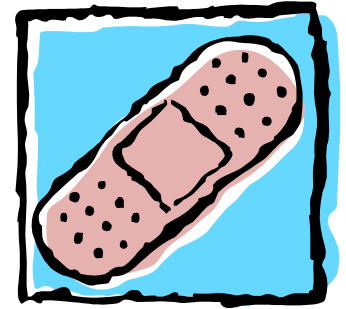
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# Community Pool Safety

Many Families visit indoor and outdoor public pools during the swimming season and year round. Public pool owners and operators should follow local, state, and federal regulations to ensure safety of their facilities. Every community pool is required by the county to have the following equipment and regulations

## Having the Appropriate Equipment

- Are there fences that limit the access to the pool and spa?
- Is there life saving equipment such as life rings and reaching poles available?
- Is there an emergency phone (land-line) available on site?
- Is there a first-aid kit available on site and is that kit properly stocked?
- Is there a stretcher with head stabilizer on site?
- Are the new drain covers in compliance with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act?



## Proper Safety Steps

- Does the staff take water samples twice a day and keep these records on file?
- Are there rules and regulation signs posted? Including bather loads, safety rules, and diaper rules?
- Has the pool been inspected by the Hamilton County Health Department to ensure its safety around the pool, as well as, the chemicals inside the pool?

## Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act

*“Two men who*

*eventually freed*

*Graeme from the spa*

*pulled so hard that*

*the drain cover broke*

*from the force”*

Who is Virginia Graeme Baker?

- The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act (P&SS Act) takes its name from Virginia Graeme Baker,
- In June 2002, Graeme became stuck to a hot tub drain and was unable to pull herself free. Efforts by her mother to pull Graeme from the drain proved unsuccessful. Two men who eventually freed Graeme from the spa pulled so hard that the drain cover broke from the force.
- Her mother, Nancy Baker, worked tirelessly to advocate for pool and spa safety. Mrs. Baker, her family and Safe Kids Worldwide actively lobbied Congress to win support for a law to require anti-entrapment drain covers and other safety devices .

# Residential Pool Safety

Adding as many water safety steps as possible is the best way to assure a safe and fun experience in a residential swimming pool or spa. Parents and families can build on their current safety practices by adopting water safety steps at home pools and spas.

## Staying Close, Being Alert Watching Children in and Around the Pool

- Teach children basic water safety tips.
- Keep children away from pool drains, pipes and other openings to avoid entrapments .
- If a child is missing, look for him or her in the pool or spa first.
- Have a portable telephone close by at all times when you or your family are using a pool or spa.
- Share safety instructions with family, friends and neighbors.



## Learning and Practicing Water Safety Skills

- Learn how to swim and teach your child how to swim.
- Learn to perform CPR on children and adults, and update those skills regularly.
- Understand the basics of life-saving so that you can assist in a pool emergency.

## Having the Appropriate equipment for Your Pool

- Install a four-foot or taller fence around the pool and spa and use self-closing and self-latching gates; ask your neighbors to do the same at their pools.
- Install and use a lockable safety cover on your spa.
- Install pool and gate alarms to alert you when children go near the water.
- Consider using a surface wave or underwater alarm.

## Drowning

Every day, about ten people die from unintentional drowning. Of these, two are children aged 14 or younger. Drowning ranks fifth among the leading causes of unintentional injury death in the United States.

- About one in five people who die from drowning are children 14 and younger. For every child who dies from drowning, another five receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.
- Nearly 80% of people who die from drowning are male.
- Children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates.
- The fatal drowning rate of African American children ages 5 to 14 is almost three times that of white children in the same age range.

*“Children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates.”*



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The Hamilton County Health Department is dedicated to the purpose of communicable disease prevention and health promotion for residents of all ages in Hamilton County and protecting the environment in which they live. The department maintains programs of education, regulatory enforcement, and provides health services devoted to the promotion of a healthy environment in Hamilton County.

The staff of the Hamilton County Health Department is devoted to meeting the challenge of public health issues, which arise on a daily basis. The department has balanced itself to provide services to residents ranging from Vital Records, Environmental Health, Health Education and Public Health Nursing.



## S-W-I-M

**S** is for **SUNSCREEN** - Don't go outside without it

**W** is for **WALK** - Don't run around pools

**I** is for **INSIDE** - Go in if it starts to rain or thunder

**M** is for **MAKE** - sure a grownup is always with you at the pool

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