



The Queensland Government is introducing new pool safety laws as a result of the most comprehensive review of Queensland's swimming pool safety laws in nearly 20 years.

The new laws will be introduced in a two-staged pool safety improvement strategy. This will provide an opportunity for pool owners and industry to adjust to the changes.

Be smart. Follow the **ABC** of pool safety

Always supervise your children near a pool

Begin swimming lessons for your children

Close the pool gate and keep your fence maintained



New pool safety laws are being introduced in an effort to reduce the incidences of drowning and serious immersion injuries of young children.

Pool fencing laws

For more information on the new state government pool fencing laws, contact the Department of Infrastructure and Planning:

Department of **Infrastructure and Planning**
PO Box 15009 City East Qld 4002 Australia
tel 1800 153 262 free-call
poolfencing@dip.qld.gov.au

www.dip.qld.gov.au/poolfencing

Your local council may have pool fencing laws with additional requirements. You should abide by both state legislation and local laws. Contact your local council for information and advice on the pool fencing standards in your area or to arrange a compliance inspection.

CPR signs

For pools constructed on or after 1 October 2003, there must be a sign with CPR instructions clearly displayed near the pool. For pools constructed after 1 December 2009, the sign must show the current procedure for CPR approved by the Australian Resuscitation Council. To obtain a CPR sign contact the Queensland Ambulance Service, the Royal Life saving Society of Queensland or your local pool shop.



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How safe is your pool?
Pool safety checklist

Toward 
Tomorrow's Queensland

Department of **Infrastructure and Planning**





In 2008/2009 eight children drowned in swimming pools in Queensland.

While new laws are important, it is essential to remember that effective pool safety depends on parents and carers being vigilant in supervising young children around pools at all times.

When will these new laws come into effect?

Stage one will be implemented from 1 December 2009 and will apply to new residential swimming pools.

Stage two will be implemented later in 2010 and will mostly target existing swimming pools.

Why should swimming pools be fenced?

On average, six toddlers drown in Queensland swimming pools every year. Appropriate pool fencing can genuinely contribute to reducing this number.

Is having my pool fenced enough?

No. You must also:

- maintain your pool fence and gate latch
- ensure the gate is always closed and the latch locks automatically
- regularly check your fence for damage and ensure objects nearby do not allow a child to climb over the fence.

Climbable objects, such as garden furniture and pot plants, can present a significant risk to young children accessing the pool area. These types of climbable objects should be kept well clear of the pool fence and put away when not in use or fixed so that they cannot be moved by a young child.

Who is responsible for pool fencing?

The owner of the swimming pool is responsible for installing and maintaining a pool fence and gate. If a tenant buys a pool that requires fencing, they are classed as the pool owner and must ensure that the pool is fenced.

What about above-ground pools?

If your pool is above ground, you must ensure that:

- the walls of the pool are at least 1.2 metres high all the way around
- the sides of the pool are free of bracing, indents, projections and filtration equipment
- any pieces of equipment (e.g. ladders and filters) are enclosed by a fence with a self-closing gate.

The installation and maintenance of a pool fence reduces the incidence of toddler drownings.

Does your pool comply?

A checklist for pool fences

Before contacting your local council for an inspection, you should check the safety of your pool fence by completing the checklist below*.

Check your pool fence

- I have a pool fence separating my pool from my neighbour.
- I have a pool fence restricting access from my house to my pool.
- The outside of my pool fence is at least 1.2 metres high all the way around.
- The bottom of my pool fence is less than 100 millimetres off the ground all the way around.
- All vertical or near vertical fence uprights are less than 100 millimetres apart.
- All horizontal or near horizontal fence rails are at least 900 millimetres apart.
- The top of my pool fence is at least 900 millimetres above any low horizontal fence rails.
- My pool fence is well maintained—there are no holes or broken posts or rails.
- My pool fence is at least 900 millimetres away from any object that would allow a child to climb over the fence—BBQs, trees, rocks, shrubs, furniture etc.

Penalties up to \$16 500 and on-the-spot fines of up to \$700 can be imposed on pool owners if their pool fence does not comply with the law.

* This checklist applies to pools constructed after February 1991. For more details on pools constructed before February 1991, visit www.dip.qld.gov.au or contact your local council.



Check your pool gate

- My pool gate closes by itself from any open position.
- My pool gate latches by itself when it closes.
- My pool gate opens outwards, away from the pool.
- I never prop open or tie back my pool gate or otherwise obstruct it from automatically closing.
- I have a latch release which is at least 1.5 metres above the ground or covered so a child cannot open the gate.

Building a new pool

- I have a building approval for the swimming pool and fencing.
- I have a sign warning people that I have a pool under construction and it is clearly visible from the road at the front of my property.
- I have obtained certification for the fence (temporary or permanent) around my new pool prior to filling it with water.
- I have obtained a final inspection of the swimming pool and permanent fence.

Check the doors and windows

Check any doors and windows that could allow a child to go from your house directly to the pool area. If the pool was built after 1991, there should be no such doors unless your local council has granted an exemption and it is still valid. For pre-1991 swimming pools, any doors giving access to the pool area need to be self-closing and self-latching. Latches must be 1.5 metres above the ground.

All windows must be child-resistant. This means that windows are at least 1.2 metres above the floor or do not open wider than 100 millimetres or have been fitted with security screens.