

Pool and spa safety a priority

As summer approaches, Council is reminding building practitioners of their obligations when building, installing or renovating a swimming pool, spa or safety barriers.

In Victoria, construction and installation of swimming pools, spas and safety barriers are subject to strict requirements under the Building Regulations 2006, which detail mandatory requirements to meet the Australian Standard.

By ensuring work complies with the building regulations, practitioners can play a vital role in improving safety outcomes around pools and spas, according to Council's Manager Regulatory Services and Municipal Building Surveyor, Matthew Patterson.

"Non-compliance can increase the risk of drowning and lead to prosecution by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) or Council," he explained. "Builders who engage in the construction of a pool or spa and associated safety barriers must be across the standards."

A person building or installing a swimming pool or spa must be registered as either a Domestic Builder - Unlimited (DB-U) or a Domestic Builder - Limited Swimming Pools (DB-L S). A Domestic Builder - Limited Gates (DB-L G) can complete works relating to the installation of inground or aboveground pools or spas, including paving and fencing.

Swimming pool and spa regulations in Victoria include requirements that:

- A building permit must be obtained to construct a pool or spa and the associated safety barriers.
- A registered builder must be engaged under a written domestic building contract to carry out building work in excess of \$5000.
- All swimming pools and spas more than 30cm deep must have a safety barrier that meets the Australian Standard. This rule also applies to inflatable or relocatable pools and spas.
- During construction it is the builder's responsibility to provide a temporary barrier. Once construction is complete it becomes the property owner's responsibility to ensure their pool is safe, and that a compliant temporary barrier remains in place until a permanent, compliant barrier is installed.
- Safety barriers must not be installed near structures that children can use to climb to access the swimming pool or spa.

For more information on swimming pools and spas refer to the VBA's website at www.vba.vic.gov.au.

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