

FACT SHEET 3: BARRIER FENCING

POOLS ARE FUN AND VERY TEMPTING. SO EVERY POOL MUST HAVE A FENCE, AND EVERY CHILD SHOULD BE SUPERVISED.

Pool fencing is required by legislation for any body of water in excess of 300mm in depth and must be in place and inspected prior to filling the pool or spa with water.

The key elements of the relevant Australian Standard, A.S. 1926-1993 are designed to deny access by unsupervised young children, especially those under 5 years of age, to the swimming pool area.

FENCES:

Essentially a barrier fence can be made of any material that has a reasonable life span when exposed to the likely conditions of weather, pool chemicals, pollution, decay, insects, salt water spray, etc.

Fences must have an effective perpendicular height of 1.2 metres. Existing standard paling fences can be used provided that they are well-maintained and at least 1650mm high. If the rails are on the outside of the pool area, then 60 degree splayed sections are to be fitted securely to the middle and top rails (unless fence height is over 2400mm).

When a fence is not controlled by the pool owners, i.e. a neighbour's boundary fence, then the pool area must be protected for a radius of 1.2 metres by an approved safety fence.

Ground clearance between bottom of fence and ground level is not to exceed 100mm and any horizontal rails, rods, etc, which

could assist climbing, should be on the pool side of the fence. If they're on the outside, they should be at least 900mm apart. The space between vertical members must not exceed 100mm.

GATES:

These must open outward only and have an effective perpendicular height of 1.2 metres. They must return to the closed position and engage the latch automatically from any position and not re-open without using the manual release mechanism. The latch must be at least 1.5 metres above ground level unless it (i) is inside the fence (ii) can only be reached over or through a fence higher than 1.2 metres or (iii) is 150mm below the fence top (no hand hole) or at least 150mm away from the edge of any hand hole opening. Latches less than 1.5 metres above ground level must be shielded so that no opening greater than 10mm is closer than 450mm. Any hand hole shall be at least 1.2 metres from ground level.

WALLS:

Walls of a building can be used as swimming pool barriers so long as they are fitted with child resistant doors and windows.

DOORS:

Doors must be fully self-closing and self-latching. They should only re-open with a manual release. They should not swing into the fenced area and the release should be on the house side, not less than 1.5 metres above the floor.

There should be no foot-holes wider than 10mm from the latch down to 100mm above the floor

WINDOWS:

Acceptable window types are as follows:

- Those totally enclosed by grills with no openings through which a 105mm diameter bar can pass.
- Those that will not open far enough to create a gap through which a 105mm diameter bar can pass.
- Those with a lowest opening panel not less than 1.2 metres from the floor and no footholds wider than 10mm down to 1.1 metres below the lowest opening panel.

This is only a small, general summary of AS1926.1. Please refer to AS1926.1 for specific requirements or contact Spasa for more information.

