

PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS, HOT TUBS, & SPAS

Overview

A swimming pool means a structure, basin or tank containing an artificially created pool of water used for:

- swimming
- recreation
- bathing
- diving
- wading
- healing or therapy
- religious rituals or other purposes

A swimming pool also includes all buildings, equipment and facilities used in connection with it. Swimming pools can be above ground, below ground or special purpose types such as a hot tub or a swim spa.

When you need a permit

If you are planning to install a swimming pool, you will likely need one or more permits. As the homeowner, you are responsible for getting all required permits.

Check with your municipality to find out what permits you need and about zoning and development bylaws; as well as to find out what permits you need. Some restrictions may apply. Make sure you get your permit(s) before starting your project.

For outdoor pools located near overhead power lines, there are additional rules and regulations to ensure safety. Outdoor installations must also satisfy minimum clearance requirements to all overhead and under-ground power lines.

Private swimming pools

Private swimming pool means a swimming pool that is constructed for the use of a single-family dwelling unit or a house with a secondary suite by the owners and their guests. Construction requirements are applicable even if the private swimming pool is designed for use as an above-ground swimming pool.



SAFETY TIPS

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CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

The National Building Code – Alberta Edition (NBC(AE)) provides criteria for design and construction of private swimming pools and for required protection.

Fence and gate design

- The entire area serving an outdoor swimming pool must be protected by a fence, building wall or enclosure that can prevent access by unauthorized persons. Its height above the outside ground level must be not less than 1.8 m (six feet) in height for a private swimming pool.
- An opening for access through a fence around a private swimming pool must be protected by a gate that is:
 - the same height as the fence,
 - equipped with a self-closing device,
 - equipped with a self-latching device on the inside of the gate located not less than 1.5 m (five feet) above the ground level, and
 - capable of being locked
- The fence and gate around a swimming pool or a private swimming pool must be constructed so that all horizontal and diagonal members are located on the swimming pool side. The space between fencing members is limited to 100 mm (four inches).
- Barbed wire must not be used on or for a fence or gate around a swimming pool or private swimming pool.
- Devices must not be installed on or adjacent to a fence or gate around a swimming pool or a private swimming pool that could cause an electric current to pass through the fence or gate.

A fence is not required around any portion of an outdoor private swimming pool where the top of the outside wall of the private swimming pool is not less than 1.8 m (six feet) above the surrounding ground level, and the only means of access to the private swimming pool is through a gate or similar.

Protective covers

As an alternative to installing a fence and gate to prevent unauthorized access to your swimming pool, the NBC(AE) permits the use of protective covers that:

- have been designed and constructed in conformance with ASTM F1346, Standard Performance Specification for Safety Covers and Labeling Requirements for All Covers for Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs
 - ask your pool company to provide you with documentation to ensure the covers are compliant
- have lockable devices to prevent access to the water by unauthorized persons



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Contact

Community and Technical Support branch of Municipal Affairs:

Hours: 8:15 am to 4:30 pm (open Monday to Friday, closed statutory holidays)

Toll free: 1-866-421-6929

Email: safety.services@gov.ab.ca

Safety Codes Council:

Toll free: 1-888-413-0099 (within Alberta)

Email: sccinfo@safetycodes.ab.ca

Web: safetycodes.ab.ca

Alberta Safety Codes Authority:

Toll free: 1-888-413-0099 (within Alberta)

Email: askasca@safetycodes.ab.ca

