



Pool Safety for Children

During warm weather months, the risk of accidental death and injury to young children increases significantly. Young children are naturally curious and unable to comprehend the risks posed by swimming in pools and playing around open windows or doors. Per the Mayo Clinic, more than 1,000 children drown each year in the United States. Toddlers are at greatest risk. For every child that drowns there may be as many as four non-fatal submersions, serious enough to require hospitalization. About 300 children under the age of five-years-old drown each year in swimming pools. In most of these cases adults were in the vicinity and more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of children who drown are missing from sight for less than five minutes. Accidents, not diseases, are the major cause of death of children one year of age and older.

- Above ground pools are safer than in-ground – *supervise children at all times!*
- Fence in above ground pools with locked gates or a retractable ladder
- Fence in in-ground pools with locking gates that have automatic springs
- Install pool alarms
- Motor-power safety covers are available for in-ground pools and can support the weight of two adults and a child
- Supervise children at all times around wading pools (kiddie pools) and empty them when finished playing in them *-a child can drown in only a few inches of water_*– even water filled containers such as buckets and ice chests can be dangerous
- Remove toys
- Teach children to swim
- Be sure children wear floatation devices at all times when around the pool – many are bathing suits that are comfortable and not easily removed
- Teach children that they must never swim alone and must never enter a pool without a float and an adult – allowing children to enter pools under adult supervision without floats gives mixed messages and a false sense of security
- Fish ponds – fish ponds are very popular, unfortunately these decorative garden ponds can be fatal for a young child. It takes only a couple inches of water to drown – of you have young children you may want to reconsider a fish pond or build an ornamental enclosure that would prevent access

The above are precautions and must never be a substitute for CONSTANT SUPERVISION.