

WATER SAFETY



a Reminder for parents and caregivers.....

Contrary to what many people believe, drowning is a quick and silent killer.

In the time it takes to ...

...cross the room for a towel (10 seconds), a child in the bathtub can become submerged.

...answer the phone (2 minutes), that child can lose consciousness.

...sign for a package at your front door (4 to 6 minutes), a child submerged in the bathtub or pool can sustain permanent brain damage.

Approximately 25-30 children die each year from drowning, making it the leading cause of death in children under age 5 in Arizona. A recent Arizona Department of Health Services study found that:

Majority of these children drowned in their own backyard swimming pool.

Most of them were missing for less than 5 minutes.

More boys drown than girls.

In warm months (May-September), 52 percent of drownings or near- drownings were attributed to a lapse of supervision.

In cold months (October-April), 78 percent of drownings or near- drownings were attributed no barrier or problems with the fence or gate.



Water safety protection can't be achieved with any single device. Any one device alone does not equal protection and water safety isn't guaranteed. Because it is humanly impossible to watch a child 24 hours a day, layers of protection that includes supervision, barriers, locks, gates, alarms, and other devices, should all be used to help ensure the safety of children around water.

Protect infants and toddlers from drowning

Infants (birth to 1 year) and toddlers are at drowning risk too! They can drown in bathtubs or when reaching into buckets, toilets, diaper pails, ice chests, and wading pools.

Never leave an infant alone in a bathtub. Do not let a preschool child care for an infant in a bath.

Do not use any devices to support an infant in the bathtub.



Empty




away.

all containers of liquid (bucket, ice chest, wading pool, diaper pail) right

Keep bathroom door closed. You may use a hook and eye latch or doorknob cover.

Superv

It is  important to remember that your children may not fear water. They may walk into a pool out of curiosity or in an attempt to reach an object. Drowning occurs swiftly and silently.

An adult "Water Watcher" should be assigned to supervise the pool/spa area or any other body of water, especially during social gatherings. Wearing a Water Watcher badge can be a physical reminder to the watcher and others identifying who is responsible for eye-to-eye contact with children in the pool.

If there are several children in the pool area, more than one adult should supervise.

It is important not to rely on swimming lessons, life preservers or any other equipment to make a child "water safe." Swimming lessons cannot "drown-proof" and are not recommended for children under age 3.

Look in the pool area first if a child is missing.

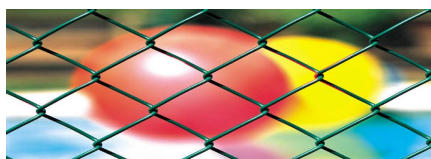
The babysitter, grandparents and friends should all know safety rules and CPR.

Have a phone by the pool to call 911 in case of an emergency.



POOLS No matter what sort of secondary barrier system you decide on for your backyard pool, remember that it will only be effective if you check it frequently for proper operation. No device is fail-safe, and no combination of devices guarantee safety.

Fencing



Fencing is the only proven barrier to prevent children from reaching the pool area. All Maricopa County building codes recognize the need to restrict access to pool yards and require perimeter fences. But to prevent access to

the pool by children, most codes require an additional section of fence to be constructed between the pool and the house, creating the four-sided fence.

The four-sided fence should be at least five feet high with no more than a 4-inch spacing between the bars.

You should have a clear view of the pool.

Children should not be able to climb over the fence.

The fence gate should be self-closing and have a self-latching lock that is out of reach of young children.

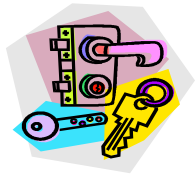
It is also essential that your fence, including the self-latching, self-closing gate, is maintained in good working order. If the gate is routinely propped open or the latch is blocked, no barrier exists. In Maricopa County through 1988-2000, 16 percent of the drowning or near-drowning cases, ages 0-4, were attributed to gate or latch failure.

Supplemental Door Locks

The addition of supplemental locks on doors and windows leading from the house to the pool can provide another layer of protection for you and your child. These locks should be used to complement other barrier methods, not as the only barrier. To be effective, these should be:

at least five feet off the ground.

in good working order and used consistently.



Pool Covers

Solar covers cannot be considered adequate barriers to prevent drowning. These products are intended to increase the pool temperature, not to serve as a protection device. These "floating blankets" may appear to be secure and entice a child to chase after a toy onto its surface. The child can slip beneath the cover, but the cover appears essentially undisturbed causing a delay in finding the child.

Pool nets or pool covers are designed to be anchored around the pool or on a track, preventing any contact with the water once in place. These covers are reported to hold the weight of a small child, or two adults during a brief rescue. As of 2001, there have been no scientific studies to show whether these types of barriers reduce drowning incidents.

Pool Alarms

Electronic pool alarms provide a warning when a child is near or in the pool. Studies have not been able to prove that alarms are reliable enough to alert adults to unauthorized entry. This type of barrier should be used only as a supplemental device.

If an accident happens, act immediately!

Yell for help. Carefully lift the child out of the pool.

Start **CPR**, if you are trained, and have someone call 911.

If you are alone, carry the child to a telephone, call 911 and continue CPR.

If you don't know CPR, the 911 operator will give you instructions by phone.

Even if the child appears normal when revived, obtain medical attention.

Source: Phoenix Children's Hospital Injury Prevention, National Safe Kids Coalition, Consumer Product Safety Commission, Arizona Department of Health Services,