

# Swimming Pool Safety at Home

With the summer months soon to be upon us, we should be thinking about swimming pool safety. Because of the alarming number of children drowning every year, this should be a concern of all homeowners with or without a pool. From Memorial Day through Labor Day 2014, at least 174 children between the ages of 1 and 14 drowned in swimming pools or spas, according to media reports compiled by the USA Swimming Foundation. Of the 174 reports, 112 victims were children younger than age 5. During the same period in 2013, 202 children between the ages of 1 and 14 drowned in swimming pools or spas, according to news accounts. Of the 202 news reports in the summer of 2013, 143 victims were children younger than age 5.

Not every child drowning is reported on or tracked by the media. In turn, it takes time for CPSC to compile data of all children drowning from around the country. Each May CPSC releases reports for drowning and non-fatal submersions for children younger than 15 years of age. CPSC data from 2007 to 2009 shows an annual average of 243 children drowned in pools or spas during the summer months, which is about 63 percent of the average annual drowning figures for these years.

The Pool Safely campaign provides information on the simple steps that parents, caregivers, and pool owners should take to ensure that children and adults stay safer in and around pools and spas: Pool Safely is a national public education campaign run by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission. The effort is to reduce child drowning, near-drowning and entrapments in swimming pools and spas.

For the third year, the campaign is focusing on populations most at risk of drowning: minorities and children younger than age 5. Never leave a child unattended in a pool or spa and always watch your children closely around all bodies of water. Designate a Water Watcher to supervise children in the pool or spa. This person should not be reading, texting, using a smart phone or be otherwise distracted. Learn how to swim, and teach your child how to swim. Learn how to perform CPR on children and adults. Keep children away from pool drains, pipes and other openings to avoid entrapments. Ensure any pool and spa you use has drain covers that comply with federal safety standards, and if you do not know, ask your pool service provider about safe drain covers.

Pool safety is also a priority of the Marion Building Department, and requires permits when installing. The City of Marion has adopted the 2015 International

Swimming Pool and Spa Code, and it has provisions in it for pool safety, including the following items:

- All outdoor swimming pools 24 inches or more in depth (including in-ground, above-ground, or on-ground pools) shall be surrounded by a barrier measuring 48" in height.
- Barriers can have limited openings, and shall not be climbable, and may be fences, or buildings.
- Gates shall swing out away from the pool.
- Door alarms shall be installed on doors that lead to the pool to alert when someone goes out to the pool area.
- Pools shall not be placed under overhead power lines.

For more information on the safety requirements stop in and speak with the Building Inspectors at the Marion Building Department or check out the Swimming Pool handout on the City of Marion Website. [www.cityofmarion.org](http://www.cityofmarion.org)

For more information and tips on swimming pool and spa safety go to <http://www.poolsafely.gov>.