

# BROWARD COUNTY BOARD OF RULES AND APPEALS



Cooling ...

Refreshing ...



The envy of the  
neighborhood!



# POOL SAFETY INFORMATION

January 2023

## A MESSAGE FROM BORA's CHIEF STRUCTURAL CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICERS



### IS YOUR POOL AS SAFE AS IT COULD BE?

- Drowning is the leading cause of death among Florida children between the ages of 1-4.
- Drowning is a significant cause of death for medically frail elderly people in Florida.
- Approximately 66% of all drownings occur in residential pools.
- By state law and the Florida Building Code, all new residential pools finished after October 1, 2000, require safety barriers.
- Barriers must be able to prevent a young child from crawling under or squeezing through barriers to gain access to the pool.
- The gate latch must be located 54" above the bottom of the gate.



(Above, Below) Pool barriers that can lessen the chance of an accidental drowning



## A MESSAGE FROM BORA'S CHIEF STRUCTURAL CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICERS

### AREAS THAT DESERVE SPECIAL ATTENTION:

- Make sure the bottom of all pool ladders maintain a tight fit to the pool wall.
- Make sure all doors leading directly to the pool area are self-closing and self-latching if the doors from inside the residence do not have alarms.
- Make sure all gates and screen doors leading to the pool area from the yard are self-closing and self-latching.
- In addition to these measures, pool safety experts remind us that supervision of children and emergency preparedness are essential to pool safety



### WAS YOUR POOL FINALIZED BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2000? ... CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING THESE NEW REQUIREMENTS OF POOL SAFETY:

- Add a yard fence, no shorter than 4 feet high, with self-closing and self-latching gates, that swing out away from the pool area.
- Install an approved pool cover, pool net or child safety fence, to be in place at all times when the pool is not being supervised.
- Install pool alarms on all operable windows and doors having direct access to the pool area to alert you if anyone exits the residence in the direction of the pool.

# A MESSAGE FROM BORA'S CHIEF ELECTRICAL CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER



The Consumer Product Safety Commission reported 33 deaths as a result of electrocutions in swimming pools from 2010 to 2018. Hot tubs and spas can present the same electrical hazards as swimming pools.

## WHAT IS ELECTROCUTION?

Electrocution is death by an electrical shock. Wet skin or wet surfaces, such as grass or a pool deck, can greatly increase the chance of electrocution when electricity is present.

## WHERE IS ELECTRICITY FOUND AROUND POOLS, HOT TUBS AND SPAS?

- Underwater lights and handrails
- Electric pool equipment (pumps, filters, vacuum, etc.)
- Electrical outlets or switches
- Radios, stereos, TVs and electronic devices
- Overhead power lines

## SWIMMERS' ELECTRICAL SHOCK SYMPTOMS INCLUDE:

- Swimmers may feel a tingling sensation, experience muscle cramps and/or not be able to move
- Panicking
- Lack of movement in swimmers

## DANGEROUS ITEMS TO LOOK FOR:

- Discolored light fixtures
- Broken or rusted electrical boxes and transformers
- Loose, broken and unattached wiring around pool equipment, screening and decking
- Broken switch or receptacle plates in the pool area
- Overhead power lines

# A MESSAGE FROM BORA'S CHIEF ELECTRICAL CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER

## ELECTRICAL DON'TS:

- Never swim alone
- Do not use electrical extension cords around pools
- Do not touch anything electrical when you are wet
- Do not allow an unqualified person to work on or around your pool
- Do not use cord-connected electronic or electric devices near the pool (i.e., radio)

## ELECTRICAL DO'S:

- Locate and label all power switches to be turned off in case a shock occurs
- Use and test GFI receptacles around pool
- Have a fiberglass rescue hook nearby for rescue purposes
- Install pool alarms to alert you if anyone exits the home in the direction of the pool area
- Learn CPR

(Right) A fiberglass rescue hook that can be used to save a swimmer in distress



(Left) A door alarm that sounds when the door/window is opened

**CAUTION:** It is recommended that you change the pool light fixture voltage from 120 volts to low voltage. The Broward County Board of Rules and Appeals has amended our local code for new construction where all lighting for pools shall not exceed 15 volts.

## A MESSAGE FROM BORA'S CHIEF PLUMBING CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER



There has been a lot of media coverage about the dangers of pool suction. Many people are not familiar with pool main drains, skimmers or vacuum pool fittings. These are the basics of what every pool owner should know

### 5 TYPES OF SUCTION ENTRAPMENT:

**Hair Entrapment:** Hair knotted or snagged in an inlet cover

**Limb Entrapment:** A limb inserted or drawn into an inlet opening with a broken or missing cover, resulting in a mechanical bind or swelling

**Body Swelling Entrapment:** Suction applied to a large portion of the body, resulting in entrapment

**Evisceration/ Disembowelment:** Suction applied directly to intestines through an unprotected sump or suction with a missing or broken cover

**Mechanical Entrapment:** Jewelry, swimsuit, hair decoration, fingers/toes, etc., caught in the opening of an or cover



(Left) Child survivor of main drain body entrapment

(Right) Hair can be sucked into a main drain, become tangled in the drain cover and difficult to free the swimmer



## A MESSAGE FROM BORA's CHIEF PLUMBING CODE COMPLIANCE OFFICER

### OPTION TO CORRECT A HAZARDOUS SITUATION FROM DEDICATED MAIN DRAIN LINES:

**Abandon** the Main Drain Line

**Install** a Vacuum Safety Release System

**Install** Dual Main Drains

**Install** an approved main drain cover that meets American National Standards Institute (ANSI/ APSP 7) for pools with one main drain

**Depending on your pool or spa, multiple methods may be required.**



(Above) Pool vacuum lock safety wall fitting

(Below) Main drain cover



### Other areas for potential suction danger are the VACUUM LINE for pool cleaners and WALL SKIMMERS

- The vacuum line should have a self-closing, self-latching fitting for times when not in use
- In most above-ground and in-ground pools and spas, there is a wall skimmer that draws water out of the pool or spa to clear waste from pool water
- The skimmer has a protective basket that sits on top of the actual intake at the bottom of the skimmer
- It is very common for someone to remove the basket for cleaning and forget to put it back in the skimmer, creating a dangerous environment for suction
- Skimmer lids should have vent holes

According to OSHA statistics, over 25,000 “slip-and-fall” injuries occur every single day and lead to over eight million ER visits in a year.

**ISPC. 808.5 Slip Resistance.** Diving equipment shall have slip-resistance walking surfaces.

**FBC Residential 4501.6.3 Water Velocity.** Pool piping shall be designed so that the water velocity will not exceed 10 feet per second for pressure piping, and 8 feet per second for suction piping.

Additional information may be obtained at the following websites:

**Water Smart Broward**  
watersmartbroward.org

**Red Cross**  
redcross.org

**Consumer Product Safety Commission**  
cpsc.gov

**There is no substitution for child supervision. Drowning happens quickly and silently. A drowning child does not scream, splash or struggle. Supervise children when there is any body of water present.**

- **Contact a licensed electrical contractor to inspect the electrical safety of your pool.**
- **Contact a licensed pool contractor to inspect for pool safety issues not related to electrical concerns.**

## **POOL SAFETY INFORMATION CONTACTS**

**Chief Plumbing Code  
Compliance Officer**

Jose Cruz-Vellon  
jcruzvellon@broward.org  
954-765-4500 (x9694)

**Chief Electrical Code  
Compliance Officer**

Kenneth Castronovo  
kcastronovo@broward.org  
954-765-4500 (x9688)

**Chief Structural Code  
Compliance Officer**

Michael Guerasio  
mguerasio@broward.org  
954-765-4500 (x9686)

**Chief Structural Code  
Compliance Officer**

Jack Morell  
jmorell@broward.org  
954-765-4500 (x9687)



## **BROWARD COUNTY BOARD OF RULES AND APPEALS**

1 N. University Drive, Suite 3500B  
Plantation, FL 33324  
[broward.org/CodeAppeals](http://broward.org/CodeAppeals)

The Board of Rules and Appeals is an independent agency authorized by Broward County Charter; and not an agency of the Broward County Commission

2,000 copies of this public document were promulgated at a gross cost of \$850.00 or \$0.43 per copy to provide the public with information about pool safety.