

## WATER SAFETY



**Swimming pools provide hours of fun for the whole family so long as a few simple safety rules are followed.**

Each year too many children die in NSW from drowning. According to the Royal Life Saving National Drowning report 2013 swimming pool deaths for children ages 0-14 have risen against the ten year average.

Children should never be unattended or unsupervised whilst around water even if they know how to swim. This is a major issue, especially for children under the age of five.

When children are taught to swim from an early age they build confidence – it's good to talk to children about water confidence and what they know about water safety. Many swim schools now teach basic water survival techniques. It is a good idea for all children to learn these.

### Supervision and safety by the pool

- Children should never be left unsupervised and children under five should always have an adult swimming within an arm's reach from them.
- Nominate a designated 'child supervisor' during parties or large gatherings to make sure children are supervised at all times.
- Have some rules about locking gates, waiting for a grown up, no running or diving and no rough play.
- Make sure the pool fencing and gate meet safety standards which includes having a self-closing gate
- Learn CPR or update CPR skills annually and make sure young children learn to swim- water confidence prevents drownings.

## WATER SAFETY

### Pool fencing – always make sure the pool gate is firmly shut

The [Swimming Pools Act 1992](#) describes a swimming pool as an excavation, structure or vessel that is capable of being filled with water to a depth greater than 300 millimetres.

A spa and a portable/inflatable pool are classified as a swimming pool by the Act which requires all swimming pools to be adequately fenced and have a child-resistant barrier installed. A spa must be fenced if it is not covered and secured by a lockable lid.

Pool owners are now required by law to conduct a self assessment of the safety of their pool and register the pool with [NSW Swimming Pool Register](#). Swimming pools are also required to have a valid *Pool Compliance Certificate* issued by local councils or accredited certifiers.

Councils are required under the [Swimming Pools Amendment Act 2012](#) to carry out its Swimming Pool Program to ensure all pools comply with the required standards.

Pool owners must contact their local council for a pool inspection and a *Pool Compliance Certificate* will be issued if the pool is compliant. A pool must be registered before this *Certificate* can be issued which is valid for 3 years.

There is a fee charged for a pool inspection and a *Pool Compliance Certificate*. Further information on swimming pools can be found on <http://www.swimmingpoolregister.nsw.gov.au>.

### Home water safety

Don't leave water in eskies, buckets, baths or toddler pools. Young children can still drown in very small amounts of water. Toddler pools must be fenced if the water depth is more than 30 cms.

Know where your child is and keep doors and gates locked if there are water tanks, drains or fountains where you live.

Never leave children under five years of age or children of any age that have a disability alone in the bath or in the supervision of older children.

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## Dam safety

Did you know five to six children drown in farm dams and water bodies each year? Most of these children are aged below five, and one third are visitors to the farm.

Having a securely fenced house yard or “safe play area” with child resistant gates and latches is the best way to prevent farm tragedies. This will help stop unsupervised access to farm hazards, such as dams and other dangers.

Families need to ensure young children stay in this safe play area unless an adult is available to take them out and closely supervise them.

For more information about child farm safety, visit [www.farmsafe.org.au](http://www.farmsafe.org.au) or email [info@farmsafe.org.au](mailto:info@farmsafe.org.au) or call the Australian Centre for Agricultural Health and Safety on 67528218.

