

BACKYARD POOL SAFETY TIPS

If you own a pool or visit a home that has a pool, remember, drowning deaths among children occur year round in Los Angeles County with most in backyard swimming pools. Most of the toddlers and infants who have drowned in backyard pools or spas were not expected to have been in the pool or spa area but rather somewhere else in the home, either asleep or playing in the home, etc. Drowning-related hospitalizations can often leave children with brain damage and disability. These drowning risks are 100% preventable by following the prevention tips below.

When Your Pool is "Not-In-Use"



- Your pool or spa must have a 5-foot minimum high fence that completely surrounds it
- If the house forms a barrier, install a separation fence make sure that all doors & windows leading to the pool area, are alarmed and locked
- If you have a door that leads to your pool or spa, that has a "doggy door", remember that children climb through these
- Ensure gate is self-closing/self-latching and opens outward away from the pool
- Keep lawn equipment, chairs, tables away from the fence to prevent a child from climbing over
- Power operated pool covers must be properly maintained
- Keep lifesaving ring and shepherd's hook in pool area & know how to use it
- Make sure that pool/spa gates are locked at all time
- Remove all inflatable toys from the pool/spa area
- Make sure the pool/spa gate is locked and turn-on all window and door alarms that lead to the pool/spa area
- Learn CPR (call the [American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles](#) at 1-800-627-7000 for classes offered in your area)
- Learn to swim. For swimming lessons in your area call the [Los Angeles County Parks and Recreation Department](#) at (626) 369-8693 or (310) 217-8361

When Your Pool is "In-Use"



- Never swim alone
- When watching children or adults in a pool/spa, supervise them like you are a lifeguard-maintain "active supervision"
- When watching children or adults in a pool/spa, do not read, eat, talk to others, sleep, listen to an audio headset, etc.)
- Designate a second adult for breaks
- An adult who supervises a pool/spa, must know how to swim and know CPR
- Keep phone at poolside for emergency use
- Know how and when to use lifesaving equipment such as a shepherd's hook or lifesaving ring
- Have children use "the buddy system"
- Children are not "drownproof" even if they know how to swim
- Inflatable toys, floaties, floatable swimsuits, are not lifesaving devises and do not replace "active supervision"
- Pool parties: Consider hiring a lifeguard through your local [American Red Cross](#)
- After use, account that everyone is out of pool
- After use remove inflatable toys from pool area
- After use, ensure self-closing/self-latching gate is in working properly
- After use, lock the gate and turn-on all window or door alarms that lead to the pool area

Plastic & Inflatable Wading Pools

Smaller Plastic & Inflatable Wading Pools



- Infants should always be within arms-reach
- Never allow older siblings to watch children in these pools
- After each use, always empty the pool and turn it upside down

Larger Inflatable Pools



- After each use, always remove the ladder
- These pools must be fenced, similarly with any pool or spa
- These pools often require fencing, under California fencing laws and include pumps and filters that require proper electrical grounding to prevent electric shock. Call your local city building department or the Los Angeles County, department of Public Works at (626) 458-5100.

Other Healthy Swimming Tips

Sun (Ultraviolet UV) Protection

- Sun rays are strongest between the hours of 10a.m. and 4 p.m. To protect yourself:
- Wear waterproof/sweat-proof UVA and UVB sunscreen
- Wear lipscreen with at least SPF 15
- Remember to reapply as indicated by the manufacturer's directions
- Wear a hat, sunglasses, and UV protective clothing



Swimming Illness Prevention*

- If you have diarrhea, do not swim. This is especially important for kids in diapers. Germs can easily spread in the water and make other people sick.
- Do not swallow the pool water. In fact, avoid getting water in your mouth.
- Take a shower before swimming and wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers. Germs on your body end up in the water.
- For Parents of Young Children:
 - Take your kids on bathroom breaks or check diapers often. Waiting to hear "I have to go" may mean that it's too late.
 - Change diapers in a bathroom and not at poolside. Germs can spread to surfaces and objects in and around the pool and spread illness. Remember if you leave the pool area, have another adult watch others while in the pool.
 - Wash your child thoroughly (especially the rear end) with soap and water before swimming. Everyone has invisible amounts of fecal matter on their bottoms that end up in the pool.

*Some information obtained from Six "PLEAs" For Healthy Swimming: Protection Against Recreation Water Illnesses CDC