

CARROLL COUNTY BUREAU OF PERMITS AND INSPECTIONS

RESIDENTIAL CODE COMPLIANCE GUIDELINES FOR SWIMMING POOL BARRIERS

Code Reference: The Code of Public Local Laws and Ordinances of Carroll County, Chapter 170
International Swimming Pool and Spa Code as Adopted and Amended

The following list of Code requirements is intended to assist you in complying with the Carroll County Building Code as adopted by Chapter 170 but does not encompass the entire Code. Failure to comply with all applicable Code requirements will result in a Notice of Violation and/or Stop Work Order until such violations are corrected. Should you have any questions regarding these requirements, please call 410-386-2674.

BARRIER REQUIREMENTS

An **outdoor swimming pool**, including an in-ground, above ground or on-ground pool, hot tub or spa shall be provided with a barrier which shall comply with the following:

1. The top of the barrier shall be at least 48" (1219 mm) above grade. The maximum vertical clearance between grade and the bottom of the barrier shall be 2" (51 mm). Where the top of the pool structure is above grade, the barrier may be at ground level, such as the pool structure, or mounted on top of the pool structure.
2. Openings in the barrier shall not allow passage of a 4" diameter (102 mm) sphere.
3. Solid barriers, which do not have any openings, such as masonry or stonewall, shall not contain indentations or protrusions.
4. Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is less than 45", the horizontal members shall be located on the swimming pool side of the fence. Spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 1 3/4".
5. Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is 45" or more, spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 4".
6. Maximum mesh size for chain link fences shall be 1 3/4".
7. Where the barrier is composed of diagonal members, such as a lattice fence, the maximum opening formed by the diagonal members shall not be more than 1 3/4".
8. Access gates shall comply with the requirement of items #1 through #7 above and shall be equipped to accommodate a locking device. Access gates shall open outward away from the pool and shall be self-closing and have a self-latching device. Where the release mechanism of the self-latching device is located less than 54" from the bottom of the gate, the release mechanism and openings shall comply with the following:
 - 8.1 The release mechanism shall be located on the pool side of the gate at least 3" (76 mm) below the top of the gate, and
 - 8.2 The gate and barrier shall have no opening greater than 1/2" (12.7 mm) within 18" (457 mm) of the release mechanism.
9. Where a wall of a dwelling serves as a part of the barrier, one of the following conditions shall be met:
 - 9.1 The pool shall be equipped with a powered safety cover.

9.2 All doors with direct access to the pool through that wall shall be equipped with an alarm, which produces an audible warning when the door and its screen, if present, are opened.

The alarm shall sound continuously for a minimum of 30 seconds immediately after the door is opened and be capable of being heard throughout the house during normal household activities. The alarm system shall be equipped with a manual means, such as touchpad or switch, to temporarily deactivate the alarm for a single opening. The deactivation switch (es) shall be located at least 54" (1372 mm) above the threshold of the door; or

9.3 Other means of protection, such as self-closing doors with self-latching devices, shall be acceptable.

10. Where an above ground pool structure is used as a barrier or where the barrier is mounted on top of the pool structure and the means of access is a ladder or steps, then:

10.1 The ladder or steps shall be capable of being secured, locked or removed to prevent access, or:

10.2 The ladder or steps shall be surrounded by a barrier.

Indoor swimming pool: All walls surrounding an indoor swimming pool shall comply with #9 above.

Prohibited locations: Barrier shall be located so as to prohibit permanent structures, equipment or similar objects from being used to climb the barriers.

Barrier exception: Where spas or hot tubs are equipped with a lockable safety cover complying with ASTM F1346, the areas where the spa or hot tub are located shall not be required to comply with the above sections.

In-ground swimming pools under construction shall have a temporary safety fence installed by the pool company. The permanent barrier shall be installed before water is added to the pool.