



City of Long Beach
Department of Development Services
Building and Safety Bureau

Anti-Entrapment Pool Drain Covers

Information
Bulletin

BU-012

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Commencing January 1, 2007, a new state law went into effect in California regarding the safety and security of swimming pools and spas located on private single-family residences. To eliminate safety hazards on new and existing swimming pools and spas, Section 115920 of the California Health and Safety Code (also known as the Swimming Pool Safety Act) requires that an approved anti-entrapment cover be installed on all pool and spa drains any time a building permit is issued for the construction of a new swimming pool or spa or the remodel or modification of an existing swimming pool, toddler pool, or spa.

Section 115928.5 of the California Health and Safety Code states as follows:

"Whenever a building permit is issued for the construction of a new swimming pool or spa, the pool or spa shall meet all of the following requirements:

(a) (1) The suction outlet of the pool or spa for which the permit is issued shall be equipped to provide circulation throughout the pool or spa as prescribed in paragraph (2).

(2) The swimming pool or spa shall have at least two circulation drains per pump that shall be hydraulically balanced and symmetrically plumbed through one or more "T" fittings, and that are separated by a distance of at least three feet in any dimension between the drains.

(b) Suction outlets that are less than 12 inches across shall be covered with anti-entrapment grates, as specified in the ASME/ANSI Standard A 112.19.8, that cannot be removed except with the use of tools. Slots or openings in the grates or similar protective devices shall be of a shape, area, and arrangement that would prevent physical entrapment and would not pose any suction hazard to bathers.

(c) Any backup safety system that an owner of a new swimming pool or spa may choose to install in addition to the requirements set forth in subdivisions (a) and (b) shall meet the standards as published in the document, "Guidelines for Entrapment Hazards: Making Pools and Spas Safer," Publication Number 363, March 2005, United States Consumer Product Safety Commission."

Section 115928.5 of the California Health and Safety Code states as follows:

"Whenever a building permit is issued for the remodel or modification of an existing swimming pool, toddler pool, or spa, the permit shall require that the suction outlet of the existing swimming pool, toddler pool, or spa be upgraded so as to be equipped with an anti-entrapment cover meeting current standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) or the American Society of Mechanical Engineers (ASME)."

As a result of the new requirements, the Department is required by state law to add an anti-entrapment inspection requirement to any building permits for the new construction, remodel or modification of swimming pools and spas for single family dwellings. Prior to approving the final inspection of a building permit for a swimming pool or spa issued after January 1, 2007, the Department's Building Inspectors must verify that an anti-entrapment device is installed.

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Those obtaining a building permit for a swimming pool or spa remodel or modification should inspect the pool or spa for anti-entrapment safeguards. If the pool was constructed in 1998 or later, it probably has anti-entrapment safeguards in place. If the pool/spa was constructed prior to 1998 it may not have one of the newly required safeguards. There are readily available products that can be installed on pools that were constructed without anti-entrapment protection. Existing pools can be retrofitted with a drain cover specifically designed to prevent entrapment. The new cover is installed simply by removing the existing drain cover and replacing it with the new anti-entrapment cover.

To view the entire state code section on the anti-entrapment requirements, please visit the state's web site noted below and check the Health and Safety Code box and enter 115928 in the search box:

<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html>

Contact a local pool contractor or maintenance company for installation information. Examples of anti-entrapment drain cover devices for existing pools or spas are noted below:

