

REQUIREMENTS FOR FENCES AROUND SWIMMING POOLS and SPAS

Thursday June 19, 2008

Revision 1

Update gate latch requirements
Added link to Florida Building Code
Added link to Florida Statute 515
Added decorative cutouts limitation

The purpose of the pool barrier fence is to create a permanent non-removable, non climbable barrier, 48 inches high around the swimming pool or spa to prevent a young child, defined in the Florida Building Code as 6 years of age or younger, from coming in contact with the water.

The requirements for child safety barriers around swimming pools and spas stems from the interaction of The Florida Building Code 2004 Chapter 424 and Florida Statute 515.

Florida Statute 515 http://laws.flrules.org/files/Ch_2000-143.pdf

Florida Building Code Chapter 424.2.17 Residential swimming barrier requirement.
Residential swimming pools shall comply with Sections [424.2.17.1](#) through [424.2.17.3](#).

Gates are to swing out away from the pool/spa only. Double swing gates are not permitted. The gate must swing close and latch automatically. The latch is to be located 54 inches high as measured from the bottom of the gate.

Fences are to be a minimum of 48 inches high.

The maximum distance from the ground to the bottom of the fence is 2 inches, or from a pool deck or structure to the bottom of the fence is 4 inches.

Vertical (up and down) members are to have no more than a 4 inch space between them.

Horizontal (side to side) members are to be no less than 45 inches apart when measured from the top of the lower member to the top of the upper member.

When less than 45 inches apart the vertical members must have a space of no more than 1 3/4 inches between them.

Wood Stockade Fence: the "good side" faces away from the pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The vertical boards butt edge to edge and there is no space between the boards.

Wood Shadow Box Fence: The maximum space between the vertical boards on the outside (side away from the pool) is 1 3/4 inches. There is no maximum space requirement on the inside boards.

Wood Picket Fence: The "good side" faces away from the pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The maximum space between the vertical boards is 1 3/4 inches.

Wood Board-on-Board Fence: The "good side" faces away from the pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The boards overlap and there is no space between the boards.

Chain Link Fence: Standard vinyl coated chain link fence 48 inches high is approved when installed with a top rail and the posts are set no more than 8 feet apart. The gate must have a plunger latch the top of which is no less than 54 inches high when measured from the bottom of the gate. The gate must only swing out, away from the pool/spa and self close and latch automatically.

PVC Plastic Shadow Box Fence: Most are **NOT APPROVED**, because the center horizontal cross member extends thru both sides of the fence and is less than 45 inches above the bottom horizontal cross member. The fence is climbable regardless of the spacing of the vertical pieces.

PVC Plastic Privacy Fence: The vertical pieces interlock and there are no spaces between the vertical pieces. **NOT APPROVED at 48 inches.** Due to the height of the bottom horizontal cross member, the distance from the top of the bottom cross member to the top of the fence is less than 45 inches. **Generally approved at 60 inches.**

PVC Plastic Picket Fence: **Generally NOT APPROVED** because with most designs the vertical pickets pass thru the horizontal cross member. If the vertical pickets are attached to the face of the horizontal cross member then the "good side" faces away from pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The maximum space between the vertical pickets is 1 3/4 inches

ALL 48 INCH HIGH ORNAMENTAL FENCES, REGARDLESS OF MATERIAL, ARE NOT APPROVED. The reason being that the circles, scrolls, cutouts, cross bars, etc that create the design cause the fence to be climbable. There can be nothing less than 45 inches above the ground or bottom horizontal cross member with a horizontal dimension greater than 1 3/4 inches.

Decorative Cut-outs in solid vertical members shall not exceed 1 3/4 inches in width or less than 45 inches apart.

If you have any questions please contact Peter Spirito at 561-718-7537