



# REGULATIONS GOVERNING RESIDENTIAL POOL/SPA BARRIERS & DRAINAGE

PINAL COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
BUILDING SAFETY DIVISION  
P.O. BOX 2973, FLORENCE, AZ. 85132  
85 N. FLORENCE STREET, FIRST FLOOR  
(520) 509-3555 FAX (520) 866-6517  
[www.pinalcountyz.gov](http://www.pinalcountyz.gov)

INFORMATION  
BULLETIN

## 010

SEP 2022

Aug 2022

A swimming pool is a body of water that is 18” or more in depth at any point, wider than 8’ and is intended for swimming. Pinal County shares the same concerns as other counties and the State of Arizona (A.R.S 36-1681) when it comes to pool safety. This bulletin is offered as a general, more simplified guideline to the Building Code as amended. Commercial pools are regulated by the State of Arizona, for more information please contact ADEQ at 1-800-234-5677. Please call Building Safety if you have any questions regarding pool barriers.

### SWIMMING POOL PERIMETER BARRIER

A swimming pool must be provided with a perimeter barrier that meets the requirements listed below (items 1-4). Final pool inspection must pass prior to filling the pool.

1. The top must be at least 60 inches above finished grade measured on the outside of the barrier. Where fencing material is used, like wrought iron or chain link, there shall be a maximum of 2" gap between the bottom of the barrier and the finished grade. If the grade is a solid surface such as a concrete deck in which case the gap may be increased to 4". If the barrier design is such that it creates a foothold or ladder effect, allowing a child to easily climb the fence (e.g. wrought iron), then it must be constructed so that the distance between the tops of the horizontal members are no closer together than 45".

2. When using chain link fencing as the perimeter barrier, the openings shall not allow the passage of a sphere 1-3/4" in diameter and the fencing shall not be less than 11 gage wire.

3. If using mesh fencing as the perimeter barrier, the mesh fencing system must not be readily removable. The bottom of the mesh fencing shall not be more than 1” above the deck or grade. The fence shall be designed and constructed so that the bottom does not pull up more than 4” and the top cannot be pull down below 60”. (Aug 2022)

4. Gates shall comply with the above requirements (60”) and pedestrian gates shall be self-closing and self-latching. When the latch is less than 54" above the bottom of the gate, the latching mechanism shall be located on the pool side no less than 3" below the gate top and there shall not be an opening larger than 2" within 18 " of the release mechanism. Pedestrian gates must swing away from the pool. All other gates shall be equipped with lockable hardware or padlocks and shall be locked at all times when

not in use.

### INTERMEDIATE BARRIER

Where a wall of the house is used for part of the perimeter barrier and contains doors that open directly to the pool area, ONE of the following may be used:

- (a) Self-closing and self-latching devices installed on all doors with direct access to the pool with a release device located a minimum of 54" above the floor, **OR;**
- (b) An alarm system installed a minimum of 54” above the floor on all doors with direct access to the pool and be a UL listed device (UL 2017).

#### Alarm specifications:

The alarm shall sound continuously for a minimum of 30 seconds immediately after the door and its screen, if present, are opened, and be capable of providing a sound pressure level of not less than 85 dBA when measured indoors at 10 feet (3048 mm).

**The alarm shall automatically reset under all conditions.** The alarm system shall be equipped with a manual means, such as a touchpad or switch, to temporarily deactivate the alarm for a single opening. Such deactivation shall last no longer than 15 seconds.

The deactivation switch shall be located at least 54 inches above the threshold of the door.

#### **OR;**

(c) If installing an intermediate barrier the height of the barrier need only be 48 “ and must not obstruct the view of the pool. Fencing material allowed can be wrought iron, chain link or mesh. The intermediate barrier must be permanent in nature and cannot be readily removable without the use of a special tool. The foothold or ladder effect discussed in item 1 of perimeter barriers apply to intermediate barriers. The intermediate barrier gate shall be self-closing and self-latching. The latch shall be 54" above the bottom of the gate.

(d) If a pet door is large enough that a sphere 4 inches in diameter will pass through, and is located in any wall of

the dwelling that is part of the intermediate pool barrier, it must be rendered unusable so the pet door cannot open, slide, or be removed.

**ABOVE GROUND POOL**

Where an aboveground pool structure is used as an approved barrier (60”) or where the barrier is mounted on top of the pool structure and a means of access is a ladder or steps, then the ladder or steps must be capable of being locked or removed to prevent access to the pool. If the ladder or steps cannot be removed, then they must be surrounded by a perimeter barrier.

**SPAS & HOT TUBS**

Spas which meet **all** of the following criteria may use an approved safety cover and need not comply with the barrier described above.

- (1) Spa must be no wider than 8' at the widest part,

and;

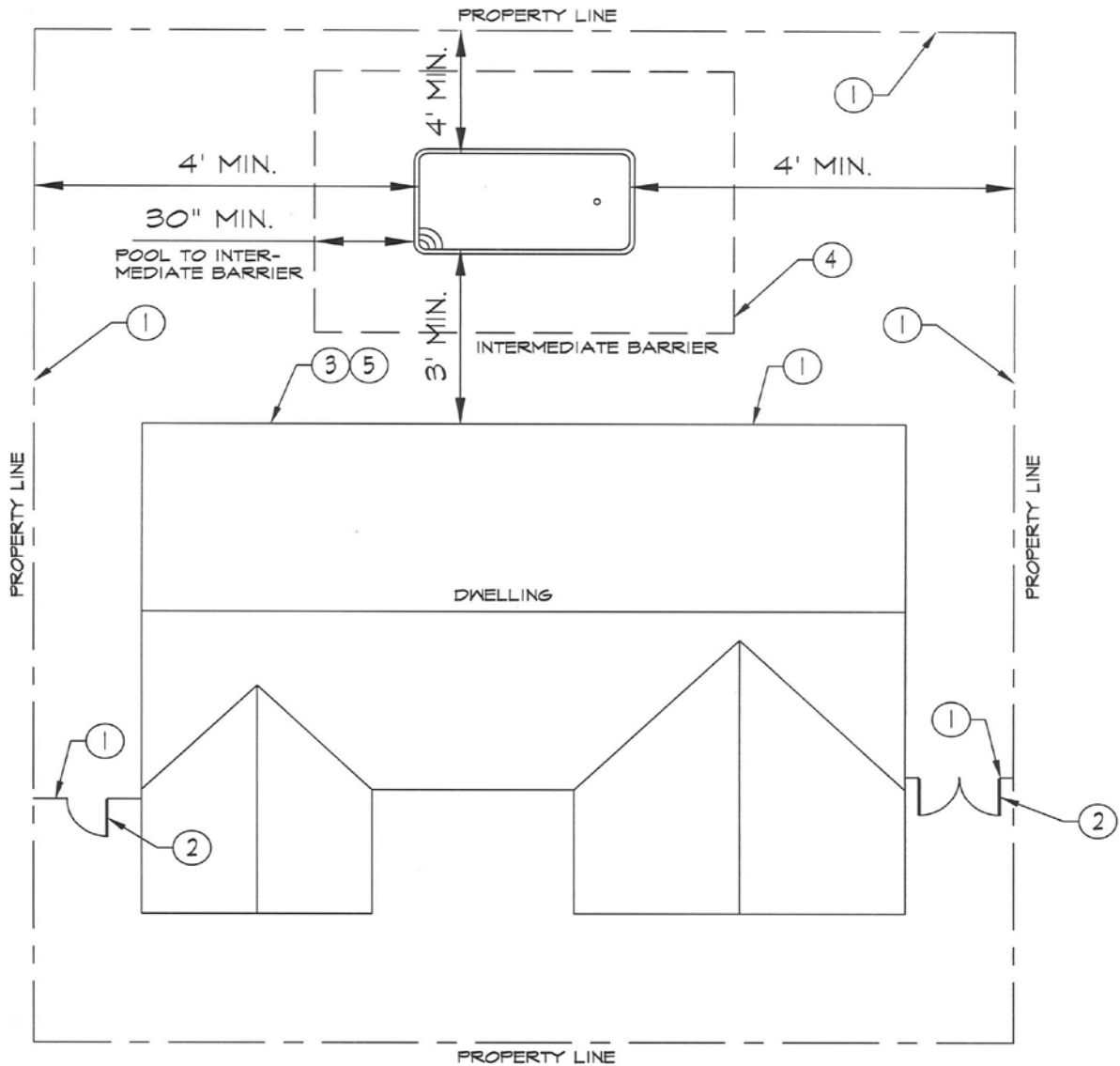
(2) Cover must be latchable by use of a tool or other device that causes the spa to be reasonably inaccessible to children, and;

(3) Cover must be able to support 100 lbs. static load, and;

(4) Cover must be designed to prevent the passage of a 4" sphere into the water when in the closed position.

**Please note, pool covers are not considered an approved pool barrier.**

**Livestock fencing stating it is “No Climb Fence” is referring to livestock. It is not compliant as a pool barrier.** (Sep 2022)



**KEY NOTES:**

- ① REQUIRED SWIMMING POOL BARRIER.
- ② PEDESTRIAN GATES MUST SWING AWAY FROM POOL AREA. ALL OTHER GATES SHALL BE EQUIPPED WITH LOCKING HARDWARE. (VEHICLE AND R.V. GATES INCLUDED.)
- ③ IF A WALL OF THE DWELLING IS USED AS A PART OF THE PERIMETER BARRIER, ALL DOORS THAT OPEN INTO THE POOL AREA MUST HAVE: 1. SELF LOCKING & SELF LATCHING DEVICES OR 2. AN ALARM SYSTEM.
- ④ IF INSTALLING AN INTERMEDIATE BARRIER, THE HEIGHT OF THE BARRIER SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 48" AND MUST NOT OBSTRUCT THE VIEW OF THE POOL.
- ⑤ WINDOWS MUST BE TEMPERED IF WITHIN 5'-0" OR LESS FROM WATERS EDGE AND LESS THAN 5'-0" ABOVE ADJACENT WALKING SURFACE. R308.4.5 APPROVED SAFETY FILM IS ACCEPTABLE.

**PROVIDE:**

- MINIMUM SETBACK REQUIREMENTS. (3' FROM STRUCTURE, 4' SIDES & REAR)
- DISTANCE OF POOL EQUIPMENT FROM POOL SHALL BE A MINIMUM OF 5'-0".
- IF APPLICABLE, PROPANE TANK PLACEMENT SHALL COMPLY WITH TABLE 3804.3 2018 IFC FOR A POOL HEATER, PROVIDE A GAS LINE SCHEMATIC. PROVIDE THE SIZE, TYPE, LENGTH OF PIPE USED AND THE BTU RATING OF HEATER.
- ALL BEDROOM WINDOWS THAT OPEN INTO THE POOL AREA MUST HAVE LATCHES SET AT NO LESS THAN 54" ABOVE FLOOR LEVEL.

\* REFER TO THE FRONT PAGE FOR DETAILED REQUIREMENTS FOR BARRIERS, GATES AND DOORS \*

## **DRAINING POOLS & SPAS**

**(Requirements set forth by Arizona Department of Environmental Quality)**

### **FILTER BACKWASH WATER**

Backwashing is defined as the rinsing and/or cleaning of cartridge or sand filters. Filter backwashing produces water that may contain elevated levels of chlorine and other pollutants.

- Backwash water may be disposed of (and filters may be rinsed) on the pool/spa owner's property. This should be done in an area that will absorb the water.
- Backwash water shall not be discharged to the sewer system, unless permission has been granted from the sewer provider.

### **DRAINED SWIMMING POOL & SPA WATER**

The draining of swimming pools or spas usually involves a large volume of water with low chlorine levels. Procedures for emptying a pool or spa are as follow:

- A pool or spa may be emptied if it is free of chlorine and other chemicals.
- The pH level of the water must be tested prior to discharge and must fall within a range of 7 to 8.
- Discharge water must not be cloudy or discolored and must be free of algae and contaminants.
- Water may be discharged off of the owner's property – provided it is directed to a drainage channel, wash, or along the curb line gutter of a paved street.
- The discharge must be monitored to ensure that it does not cause any erosion of the drainage channels or washes.
- Discharge water may be used to irrigate vegetation on the owner's property.

### **The following restrictions apply to swimming pool and spa discharge activities:**

- If a pool or spa has been acid washed, the water may **not** be discharged off the pool/ spa owner's property.
- A pool or spa shall **not** be emptied until the chlorine is  $\leq 1$  part per million (1 milligram/liter).
- Discharges may **not** be drained into unpaved/strip-paved alleys or unpaved/strip-paved streets.
- Discharges may **not** run onto a neighbor's property or across a sidewalk.
- Discharged water may **not** cause erosion or transport sediments.
- Pools/spas may **not** be permanently connected to a storm drain, drainage channel, or wash.