

# The Sensible Way to Enjoy Your Aboveground/Onground Swimming Pool



Buster Crabbe Swimming Pools

***An Essential Safety Guide—Mandatory Reading***



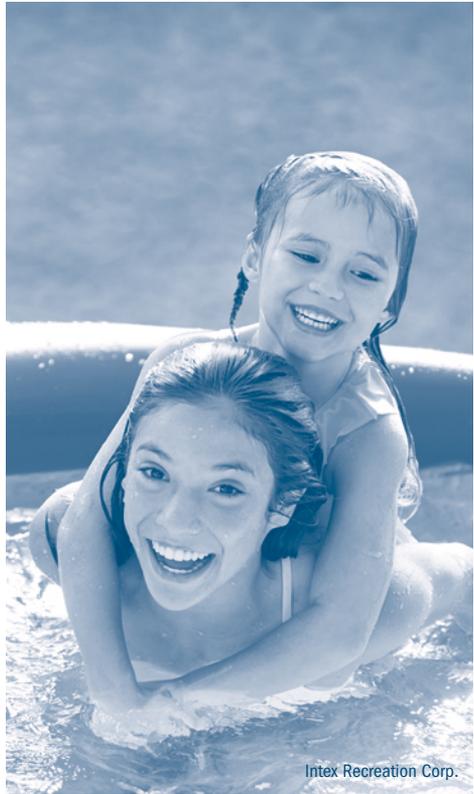
**POOL &  
HOT TUB  
ALLIANCE**

*It is your responsibility to enforce the rules of safety.*

# Preface

This booklet has been prepared by the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA) to inform you about general safe use, operation and maintenance of your pool. It represents the collective expert safety knowledge of the Aboveground and Onground pool manufacturing industry, however, it does not address aspects of pool design, operation and maintenance. Please refer to individual manufacturer instruction manuals for more specific details on product installation, use, maintenance and safety. Keep them, along with this booklet, for ready use and reference and be sure to pass them along to future owners or renters.

**Aboveground/onground swimming pools are fun—but along with the fun comes responsibility. Be sure that good times are safe times. Establish rules and enforce them. Supervise your pool.**



Intex Recreation Corp.

## **Special thanks to members of the PHTA-4 Aboveground/Onground Residential Swimming Pools Standard Writing Committee (SWC):**

Bestway (USA) Inc.

Blue Torrent Pool Products

Buster Crabbe Swimming Pools

Champlain Plastics Inc.

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Latham Pool Products

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Radiant Pools

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U. S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)

# The Sensible Way to Enjoy Your Aboveground/Onground Swimming Pool

Congratulations on becoming an aboveground/onground swimming pool owner! Your pool can give you, your family and guests many years of fun and relaxation. Sensible use of the product is the key to safety. It is the pool owner's responsibility to provide competent supervision for the pool's safe use, operation, and maintenance.

This booklet contains important safety information you should know about operating and maintaining your pool. It will help you understand some of the causes of pool-related accidents and how to prevent them. It is your responsibility to be sure that your family and guests use the pool sensibly and safely.

In addition to this booklet, it is important to read and keep all of the operating instructions, owners' manuals and warranties for your pool and its equipment. Clearly understand and practice the specifics of safe operation and proper maintenance, which this publication provides. Keep this booklet on file for your own reference and pass it along to future owners or renters. The

safety information in this booklet should be reviewed with children and guests before using the pool.

It is the pool owner's responsibility to secure the pool against unauthorized, unsupervised or unintentional entry. Remember, pool misuse can result in serious injury and/or be dangerous to life and health.

**First-time users run the highest risk of injury! Before they enter the pool, inform them of the safety rules.**

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*By carefully reading this booklet, you may save the life of a child or prevent serious harm to yourself, family members, or friends. It is your responsibility to learn and understand safety principles and rules. To ensure safety, every pool owner must read this booklet and implement these safe practices.*

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Buster Crabbe Swimming Pools

# Good Reasons for Thinking Safety First

Informed users are concerned about safety because serious injuries and even death can result from unsafe use of aboveground pools, pool equipment and associated products.

## Important! No Diving



**Aboveground/Onground swimming pools are designed for swimming and wading only. They are not deep enough for diving, jumping or sliding. Do not use diving boards, slides, trampolines or any other similar objects or platform on aboveground/onground pools. Diving, jumping, or sliding is prohibited, is extremely dangerous and these actions can easily result in severe injury, death or paralysis.**

**In an aboveground/onground pool, diving, jumping or sliding is prohibited because the pool is not deep enough for it. Impress upon all swimmers before they enter the pool that you will not allow diving, jumping, or sliding in your aboveground/ onground pool.**

**SIGNAGE.** All aboveground/onground pools should be labeled with “No Diving” signs supplied by the manufacturer and affixed as recommended

or applied by the manufacturer. As the pool owner, it is your responsibility to maintain these signs and make sure they are not covered, removed, or obscured by a deck or other obstruction. If the signs become faded or worn, are obstructed, or are removed or damaged in any way that makes them unreadable or inaccessible, it is your responsibility to replace these signs with similar signs which display the risks in both text and icon format. Do not allow the use of your pool without visible “No Diving” signs in place.

**Paralysis - Do not dive, jump, or slide into your aboveground/onground pool. It is not deep enough for these activities! Paralysis, severe injury or death can result. DON'T LET THIS HAPPEN TO YOU!**

Diving, jumping or sliding into an aboveground pool is prohibited. If you jump into the pool, you could seriously injure your back or neck or hurt others. If you dive or slide into the pool, you could hit your head on the bottom or side, sustaining a spinal cord injury and possibly becoming paralyzed from the neck down for the rest of your life! A number of people who ignored these rules and chose to dive are now paralyzed! The facts show that many of these people were experienced divers! Inform family and guests who come to enjoy your pool of the safety rules you have established. **DON'T DIVE, JUMP OR SLIDE!** Practice safety. Remember, it is the responsibility of the parent, caretaker and pool owner to prevent accidents.

# Guidelines for Using Aboveground/Onground Swimming Pools

As a pool owner, you may be legally liable for the safety of all persons who use your pool. Be sure your insurance policy is updated to include ownership of your pool. You are responsible for the safety of all persons who use your pool.

Facing ownership responsibilities does not mean taking the fun out of using your pool. If you apply safety practices and use good judgment, you will find that the benefits of a pool can far outweigh the risks. Here are some guidelines for using your aboveground/onground swimming pool.

## Supervision

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**LAYERS OF PROTECTION – Never leave the pool unsupervised. When supervision is not available, even for a moment, close the pool.**

**Supervision is the primary layer of protection and the key to reducing the number of submersion incidents. Appoint one responsible adult as a “designated water watcher.” One individual must assume primary responsibility for constant visual supervision of the pool.** The supervisor must study the contents of this booklet as well as any instructions from the pool manufacturer and be thoroughly familiar with all facets of the safe operation of the pool. He or she will take responsibility for communicating safety information to all persons who enter the pool. Supervision should be continuous when the pool is in use. **The supervisor or “designated water watcher” is responsible for enforcing “house rules” for**

**your pool.** Never leave children with caretakers or supervisors unless they are capable and responsible in the pool environment. The number one root cause of child drownings is distraction. Frequently, these tragedies occur when a party or family get together is occurring, and all the adults think another adult is supervising the pool.

It is a good idea to designate a backup for times when the primary supervisor is unavailable. (When one supervisor is called away, i.e., to answer the door bell, another supervisor must be appointed immediately.) The primary supervisor must not leave the area, even for a minute, unless another supervisor is given the sole task of taking over the supervision responsibility. Never assume that a backup supervisor has taken over when the primary supervisor is called away, i.e., to answer the door bell, use the rest room, or attend to a non-swimming child: another supervisor must be appointed immediately.

If you must leave the pool area, even for one minute, take children with you. One lapse in supervision can spell tragedy. Do not allow anyone of any age to swim without a “designated watcher” actively supervising. Examples of good safety behavior by adults are important to educating and safeguarding children. **Remember to secure, lock, or remove the ladder and store it away from the pool to prevent access when the pool is not to be used.**

When the pool is not in use, the pool owner is responsible for safeguarding the pool to prevent unauthorized access.

As a general rule, one designated water watcher cannot supervise more than 5 children at one time. When more than 5 children are swimming, it is advisable to add more designated water watchers.

Draw up these rules from information in this booklet and other safety and maintenance information provided by the manufacturer or dealer. These rules should cover such things as the proper use of pool games, the consumption of food and alcoholic beverages, maintenance, the use of electrical appliances and the handling of chemicals. Establish rules immediately. Write them in simple language and post them near the pool where they are easy to see. These rules should be clearly communicated to and understood by all persons, young and old, who use your pool. **Most importantly, consistently enforce these rules.**

**BARRIERS** – The ANSI/APSP/ICC-8 *American National Standard for Model Barrier Code for Residential Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs* establishes layers of protection to complement the requirement for constant adult supervision of young children around aquatic environments. A *Model Residential Pool Enclosure By-law for Canadian Municipalities* is available from the PHTCC.

At times, children will do the unexpected, catching their supervisors off guard. Additional layers of protection such as a fence, wall or natural barrier of sufficient height are used to deter unauthorized and unsupervised people out of your pool.

All too frequently, the sound of a child drowning is silence. There is little to no sound, because they are under water. Don't let silence or the lack

of any sound of distress assure you that nothing is wrong – thrashing and screaming while drowning often does not occur.

Pools are attractive to children, who must be kept away from them in the absence of adult supervision. Remember, these layers of protection will only delay and may not prevent a toddler from entering the pool area. Supervision is the only way to prevent an accident.

Gates and doors, including sliding glass patio doors, should be self-closing and self-latching to prevent unauthorized and unsupervised entry and use of the pool area by children. Alarms similar to burglar alarms may be placed on the doors to alert caretakers of unauthorized entry to the pool area. (The inside latch should be above the reach of toddlers or young children.)

Fences are not child proof, however, they do provide layers of protection for a child when there is a lapse in adult supervision. Fences give parents additional time to find a child before the unexpected can occur. **Only adult supervision can prevent drowning accidents. All layers of protection must be kept in good working order at all times. Remember to secure, lock or remove the ladder and store it away from the pool to prevent access when the pool is not to be used.**

Check with your state, provincial, and local government to learn their specific requirements concerning barriers and other layers of protection around pools. If specific requirements do not exist, contact PHTA for the ANSI/APSP/ICC-8 *American National Standard for Model Barrier Code for Residential Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs* and the PHTA

brochure entitled “Layers of Protection.” *A Model Residential Pool Enclosure By-law for Canadian Municipalities* is available from the PHTCC.

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*Layers of protection such as a fence, wall, or natural barrier around your pool can help keep out children under the age of five and all other unauthorized users. Make sure that your fence has a self-closing and self-latching gate and is properly maintained. Remember there is no substitute for adult supervision.*

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## **Swimming Ability**

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If you are unsure of someone’s swimming abilities, make sure they stay in the shallow water area and watch them closely. If you wish to teach non-swimmers or poor swimmers, the shallow area of the pool is an excellent place for instruction. Never swim alone or allow others to do so. Never allow anyone to swim when overtired, feeling chilled or after taking drugs or drinking alcohol.

Describe or demonstrate to everyone the underwater shape and depth of the pool. You should be aware that visual inspection of the pool may be misleading due to a variety of factors.

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*A telephone near the pool area will provide quicker access to a medical facility in case of an emergency.*

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**Teach Your Children to Swim!** Three to five years of age is the best time for swimming lessons. Do not be lulled into a false sense of security because your child knows how to swim— adult supervision is still required. Never consider children “water safe” despite their swimming skills, previous instruction or experience. Many professionals warn that these lessons may provide a false sense of security to a child’s family and not actually prepare a child for surviving a true emergency. It also makes sense for the supervisor and other responsible family members to be trained in artificial respiration and/or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Instruction is available from local community organizations such as the American Red Cross or the Canadian Red Cross.

## **Drowning Prevention and Safety Tips**

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**Drowning is the leading cause of accidental death for American infants and children ages 1 to 4.** According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), there are 4,900 pool and spa drowning-related injuries treated in emergency departments every year and at least 300 children under 5 years old drown in pools, spas and hot tubs annually. Most of the cases involve inground residential pools. Drowning in all bodies of water remains the second-leading cause of injury-related death among children ages 1 to 14 nationwide.

Children are naturally attracted to swimming pools and associated pool toys. To prevent drownings and other serious injuries you must keep children away from pools and all bodies of water in the absence of adult supervision. Remove all pool toys when the pool is not in use.

Organizations such as PoolSafely.gov, the American Red Cross, the Drowning Prevention Foundation, Think First, the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the YMCA of the United States, the National Rehabilitation Hospital, the National Swimming Pool Foundation, the Canadian Red Cross and Lifesaving Society promote that **constant, undivided adult supervision** is the primary element in an integrated approach to drowning prevention.

**SAFETY TIPS** – PHTA has a variety of safety brochures offering safety tips. For more information or to request a hard copy, email PHTA Member Services at [memberservices@phta.org](mailto:memberservices@phta.org) or call 703.838.0083 ext. 301.

- Remove vegetation and other obstacles to ensure a clear view of the pool. Maintain a clear zone around the perimeter of the pool.
- Do not place objects (e.g., chairs, tables or equipment) near the pool barrier or side of the pool because a child or youngster could climb them to gain access to the pool.
- A fence, wall, or natural barrier must be of sufficient height to keep unauthorized people out of your pool. Doors and access gates, if used, should have a self-latching or self-closing mechanism above the reach of toddlers to protect against unauthorized entry and use.
- Limit access to the pool by locking doors or gates whenever swimming is not supervised.
- Be especially alert for potential drowning accidents if you use any lightweight, floating pool covers (i.e., solar or insulating covers). No one should walk or crawl on them. The pool should never be used when these covers are in use because someone may become entrapped beneath them. Never remove covers while in the pool.
- Floating toys attract youngsters. Remove toys from the pool when not in use. Your child can easily fall into the pool while trying to retrieve one. Keep toys, particularly baby walkers, tricycles or wheel toys away from the pool.
- Do not rely on plastic inner tubes, inflatable arm bands, water wings or other flotation devices to prevent accidents. Do not permit playful screaming for help (false alarms) that might mask a real emergency.
- Always seek the advice of a pool and spa professional when creating a safety checklist and ask to see their credentials to ensure that those who maintain your aboveground/on-ground pool are trained to maximize the “Layers of Protection.” Remember, safety is ultimately your responsibility as the pool owner.
- Maintain your pool water. A “green pool” with no or little visibility of the bottom can hide a drowning child. If your pool’s filtration system is out of order, or the chemicals are out of balance and you can’t correct the situation yourself, call a pool professional for help, or drain the pool.
- Do not allow anyone to hold their breath underwater for an extended period of time (more than 30 seconds). This can lead to loss of consciousness and drowning even in a shallow pool.

## Exercise and Fitness

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Your aboveground/onground swimming pool provides a place for convenient, effective exercise. It can be used for both serious lap swimming and for performing calisthenics and other exercises. Consult your physician before beginning any exercise program.

Before entering the pool, it is recommended that you do warm up exercises first. To prevent unpleasant sensations, always test the water temperature before entering the pool.

Likewise, when exiting the pool after strenuous exercise, take care to adjust to being “back on land” again. Your muscles may be fatigued, the air may feel cold and the wet ground around you may pose a slipping hazard.

**Lap swimming is perhaps the best form of aerobic conditioning — you can efficiently exercise your heart without placing stress on your weight-bearing joints and the lumbar spine.**

According to Dr. Jane Katz, author of *Swimming for Total Fitness*, moving the arms and legs against the resistance of water is similar to exercising with weights, but since water doesn’t allow any sudden, harmful movements and your body is buoyant, the risk of injury is lowered.

Exercises for flexibility, aerobics and strength are easier in water than on land because being in water effectively lessens the pull of gravity on your body. It is easier (particularly for older people or those with painful joints or weak leg muscles) to do calisthenics in water.

Your pool is an excellent place to exercise. But use good judgment in

monitoring your own exercise and in supervising others who exercise in your pool. **Do not use the pool alone!**

## Entertaining

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Your pool can be the focal point for happy entertaining. **Plan ahead to prevent accidents and injuries and to make your entertaining truly enjoyable.**

- Never leave the pool unsupervised. The supervisor or “water watcher” is responsible for constant visual supervision of the pool.
- Whether having a party or just having a few people over for a swim, think

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***Alcohol or drugs do not mix with pool activities.***

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about the number of invited guests and their swimming skills. Plan ahead; children require constant attention.

- Food and drink play an important part in entertaining. Establish an area away from the pool for refreshments. This will prevent debris from falling into the pool and prevent accidental falls caused by spilled food or drink.
- Your guests probably will be bare-footed while near the pool. Use only unbreakable dishes, beverage containers, and utensils. Never use glass anywhere near the pool. Broken glass may be hard to see in water and extremely difficult to get out of the support system. If glass should break and fall into the water, it may be necessary to drain, clean and re-fill the pool. Better to set a strict “no glass” rule for the pool area.

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*Entertaining can be both fun and safe with a little planning and good judgment. Use only unbreakable dishes, beverage containers and utensils. And never allow anyone to use the pool under the influence of alcohol or drugs.*

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- Keep electrical appliances a significant distance from the pool. Don't use extension cords. **Use a ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) on any appliance or electrical device that is used poolside.** Where possible, use battery-operated appliances around the pool. Electrocutation from appliances and telephones in contact with water is a real danger.
- Insist that poor swimmers or non-swimmers stay in water depths that are not over their heads. Do not assume that everyone near or in the water can swim well or will know what to do in the event of an emergency.
- Wherever practical, anyone who uses your pool should shower with soap and water before use. Showering before use washes away many of the common skin bacteria and removes lotions, deodorants, creams, etc. Perspiration and lotions will reduce the effectiveness of the pool disinfectant and lessen the ability of the filter to work efficiently.
- People with skin, ear, genital or other body infections, open sores or wounds, etc. should not use the pool because of the possibility of spreading infection.
- Young children and infants must ALWAYS wear sealed "swim diapers" in case of bowel movement while in the pool. Otherwise, there is significant risk of unpleasant infection to the child and all other bathers in the pool.
- Urinating in the pool is NOT acceptable. Urine combines with chlorine to form chloramines – ineffective as a disinfectant and a skin, eye, and lung irritant in high concentrations. Add "No Pee in the Pool" to your Pool Rules and signage.
- If you use your pool at night, provide adequate lighting in and around the pool so that the pool bottom is clearly visible.
- **The use of alcohol or drugs does not mix with pool activities.** These substances act as depressants. They can "slow you down" because they affect the part of the brain that exercises restraint and control. Alcohol can instill false courage or "bravado," leading people to try things they normally would not, such as horseplay or diving in aboveground/onground swimming pools. Therefore, persons who have been drinking alcohol should not be allowed in the pool and should be carefully supervised in the area surrounding the pool.
- Prescription medicines sometimes cause drowsiness or have other side effects. If you are taking prescription medicine, check with your doctor before using the pool.
- Using inflatable toys, rafts and floats in your pool can be fun. Remember that they are also deflatable. Poor swimmers or non-swimmers should use them only in shallow water.

- **Games that may appear safe sometimes are not. Encourage and supervise the use of good pool games and toys.**
- Always obey and enforce safety rules. Insist that there be no running, pushing or roughhousing near the pool. Never throw anyone into the pool.
- Prohibit activities such as diving through an inner tube. Serious head or neck injuries can occur regardless of water depth, due to hitting the head on the inner tube and/or the bottom or side of the pool.
- Help guests who have removed eye-glasses or contact lenses for swimming. Be aware that their depth perception and ability to judge distance are changed. Children especially may be unaware of the difference.
- Do not allow running on the pool deck, as injuries may occur from slips and falls.
- Stay out of your pool during lightning or rainstorms because there is a possibility of electrocution from the lightning hitting the water.

- **You have the bottom line responsibility in poolside entertaining. Use good judgment to help protect yourself, your family, and guests.** Prohibit use of the pool by persons whose condition or ability you doubt. Remember, you are in charge of your pool, and may be legally liable if someone is injured.

## Drink Responsibly

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Many people believe they have to drink a lot to be affected by alcohol. Studies show this just isn't true. **The alcohol in just one or two beverages can affect your judgment, even though you don't feel or appear to be "drunk."** A small amount of alcohol can slow your reflexes. This is especially true if you are tired or on medication— such as cold or allergy remedies or prescription drugs. Plan your events so swimming comes before drinking any alcoholic beverages. Studies have shown that alcohol is directly related to 50-80% of diving accidents. The effects of alcohol are a major contributor to all other types of pool accidents.

**Supervise your pool activities!**



Intex Recreation Corp.

# Overall Safe Operation and Maintenance of Your Aboveground/Onground Pool

Keeping your pool in top operating form is very important to help ensure the safety of those who use it and to protect your investment. Carefully read, understand and follow the operating and maintenance instructions supplied by the pool manufacturer and the manufacturers of associated products (e.g., filters, pumps, chemicals). This booklet is not intended to replace information supplied by manufacturers. A good general rule is to visually inspect your pool area and equipment regularly. If anything looks broken, worn, corroded, frayed or not right, contact your pool professional for advice and repairs. A simple repair or replacement may prevent an injury or save a life. It may also prevent more serious or expensive equipment problems.

## Equipment In and Around the Pool

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- A variety of accessories are available to complement your pool. Be aware of all precautions related to the installation, use, and maintenance of these products. It makes sense to pay special attention to educating children about safety precautions. Teach your children about equipment maintenance and proper upkeep of the pool. As they get older, your children will learn from your example that they must respect the pool and surrounding area and act responsibly.
- Pool slides and diving boards require a greater water depth than is available in an aboveground pool.
- Therefore, they must not be used with aboveground pools.
- Trampolines must never be used with aboveground pools.
- A deck around your pool can add real beauty and enjoyment. Be sure your deck has a slip-resistant surface with adequate drainage. Overall, slips and falls constitute the greatest number of accidents involving pools. Keep the deck or patio clean and clear of all debris. Check periodically for signs of wear and tear, which may make these surfaces hazardous. Remember that diving, jumping or sliding into an aboveground/onground pool is prohibited even if you have an attached deck: ensure that No Diving signs are visible from the deck!
- Rope and Float Lines. If your pool is furnished with a rope and float line, refer to the manufacturer's instructions for installation and use.
- Pool Covers. Pool covers are a real benefit to you in terms of saving energy and water and keeping debris out of the pool. For safe installation, use and maintenance of these covers, carefully read and follow the directions of the manufacturer. These are not safety covers. They do not prevent drowning or entry into the pool. For more information see "Drowning Prevention Tips."
- Avoid the possibility of someone being trapped under the pool cover by always completely removing the cover from outside of the pool before use. Never swim under the cover. Drain any standing water from the surface of

your pool cover (e.g., by using a water pump). Even a small amount of water may be sufficient for a small child to drown on top of the cover.

- Safety Covers. If you use a pool cover as a safety cover, it must comply with ASTM F 1346-91 *Standard Performance Specification for Safety Covers and Labeling Requirements for All Covers for Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs*. Carefully read the manufacturer's instructions for safe use.

## Ladders, Steps, & Handrails

**Never allow anyone to swim between the ladder and the pool wall or through the risers.**

**Only use an aboveground/onground pool ladder or staircase to enter or exit your pool.**

- Ladders may be slippery when wet. Use caution! Always assist young children when using the ladder.
- It is the pool owner's responsibility to secure the pool against unauthorized, unsupervised or unintentional entry.
- Prevent unauthorized or unsupervised use of your pool, particularly by children and toddlers. **Remember to secure, lock or remove the ladder and store it away from the pool to prevent access when the pool is not to be used.**
- Follow manufacturer's instructions for installation and safety.
- Face the ladder when going up or down. Instruct pool users about proper use of pool ladders and stairs.

- Never allow anyone to swim between the ladder and the pool wall or through the risers. They can become entrapped and may drown.
- **Taylor's Rule: Never swim between the wall and the ladder or through the ladder risers. Death by drowning may result. \***
- Allow only one person at a time on the ladder. Never allow anyone to dive or jump from ladders, steps or from the ladder platform.
- Check all nuts and bolts regularly to make sure the ladder stays sturdy and safe.
- Permanently installed ladders, handrails and swimming pool steps must be securely mounted. Routinely inspect them to ensure that they are firmly in place. Check for broken treads, sharp edges and loose bolts and nuts. Keep handrails, steps and ladders unobstructed for use. Don't use them for hanging towels or goggles, tying up rubber rafts and the like.

*\*Eleven year-old Taylor Velargo drowned on June 11, 2000, when he became entrapped while attempting to swim through the risers of an aboveground pool ladder.*



## Suction Outlets (Drains)

- Never enter the pool if a suction fitting or suction outlet cover (drain cover) is loose, cracked, broken or missing. Immediately notify the pool owner or operator if you find the outlet (drain) cover loose, broken or missing.
- Never play or swim near suction fittings. Your body or hair may be trapped causing permanent injury or drowning. Tell children, particularly, that these devices are not toys. Instruct all swimmers not to stick their fingers, toes or body into them.
- Your pool's inlet and outlet fittings, grates, skimmer and suction outlet (main drain) covers should be kept in good condition and in place at all times and should be secured in such a manner that they can't be removed without the use of tools.
- Your aboveground pool's suction outlet fittings and suction outlet covers must comply with the latest edition of APSP/APSP-16 *Standard for Suction Fittings for Use in Swimming Pools, Wading Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs*. If the suction outlet cover is in compliance, there will be a designation marker on the cover/fitting. If the drain cover does not comply, shut down the pool until the drain cover is replaced. If you need assistance to determine this, please consult a pool professional.\* To search for a PHTA member professional in your area, visit [PHTA.org/MemberLocator](http://PHTA.org/MemberLocator). Anyone with long hair should be cautioned not to get their hair near a pool outlet. Hair entanglement is the leading cause of entrapment. The suction can cause hair or body entrapment and

## WARNING DROWNING HAZARD



**Avoid Evisceration**



**Avoid Drain Covers**



**Avoid Body Entrapment**



**Avoid Finger Entrapment**



**Avoid Hair Entanglement**

drowning. Never allow a child to play in a way that could permit the child's hair to come near the drain cover. If you have long hair, pin it up or wear a bathing cap.

For further consumer awareness information, visit the website of the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission at [CPSC.gov](http://CPSC.gov) and the Pool & Hot Tub alliance at [PHTA.org](http://PHTA.org).

## Filter Systems

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- Filtration equipment requires care in handling as well as regular maintenance and replacement of parts to function properly and efficiently. Any replacement pump capacity must not exceed the maximum rated flow marked on the suction outlet cover.
- Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions for maintaining, servicing or repairing a filter or separation tank. Regularly inspect this equipment while it is turned off and always replace worn or damaged parts.
- Most filter systems can maintain internal pressure even when shut off. Never inspect or perform work on your filter equipment without turning the system off and bleeding off the internal pressure through the manual valve provided for that purpose. Refer to the manufacturer's instructions.
- When you restart your filter after maintenance or when you are turning on your equipment to put your pool in operation, always bleed off the air in your filter tank and then stand back.

Serious bodily injury can occur if the top of the filter separates from the bottom with sudden force because of some problem or error on your part.

- Always securely clamp the top and bottom of a two piece filter in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Serious bodily injury or death can result if the top of a two-piece filter is blown off by air pressure in the tank. **If you are at all unsure of how to proceed, ask your pool professional.**

## Heaters

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- Heaters produce carbon monoxide, a poisonous gas. Do not place heaters under or near windows. Follow manufacturer's instructions.
- Heaters should be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and should be in accordance with state, provincial, or local government regulations or fire codes. Heaters may be hot to the touch. Do not place or drape any flammable material (e.g., a towel or tee shirt) on top of or near a heater.
- If you wish to use a propane heater, consult local regulations for the safe use, hookup and storage of propane products. These regulations may be under the control of local fire or municipal departments, county building codes, etc. Learn your local regulations and follow them.
- **With propane or natural gas heaters, when lighting or relighting the pilot or turning the heater on or off, refer to the manufacturer's instructions on the name and rating plate.** This plate is attached to the heater inside the control compartment. Following these instructions will prevent injuries. Gas is explosive and flammable.

\*PHTA member companies are independent contractors and are not employees or agents of PHTA. To search for a PHTCC-member professional, visit [www.poolcouncil.ca/locate-a-member/](http://www.poolcouncil.ca/locate-a-member/) PHTCC Recommended Guidelines "Suction Entrapment Avoidance Provisions" (G-0109)

- **Regular inspection and maintenance of a propane or natural gas heating system is a must.** If any part of the system appears worn, damaged, corroded or otherwise inoperative, discontinue use and contact a professional immediately.
- If a gas fired heater is installed indoors it must be vented to the outside.

## Adequate Lighting

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If the pool is used after dusk, adequate lighting must be provided. Illumination must be sufficient to see swimmers in the pool and allow swimmers to clearly judge pool depth as well as all features in and around the pool. Consult your local licensed electrical contractor for recommendations.

## First Aid

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Preventing an emergency is the best preparation: Never leave a child alone in or near a pool or any other body of water.

### **CUTS, CONTUSIONS, AND ABRASIONS.**

The pool environment, as well as associated products and equipment, can be a source of injury to users. Slipping and falling can result in cuts or scrapes or broken legs and arms. Horseplay, improper use of equipment, failure to store equipment out of and away from the pool area or failure to follow manufacturers' instructions and warnings, can result in serious trauma and permanently disabling and/or disfiguring injuries.

### **ELECTRICAL SHOCK/ELECTROCUTION.**

Water is an excellent conductor of electricity. Electrical shock or electrocution can occur in a pool if live electrical current flowing through appliances and devices (including current from a telephone) comes into contact with the water. Make sure all electrical appliances and devices are protected by a ground fault circuit interrupter, or GFCI, and that no electrical outlet is within 6 feet of the pool wall.

Have a complete first aid kit at poolside and make sure that someone knows how to use the contents properly. Post your address and a list of emergency telephone numbers in a visible location should an emergency occur and someone needs to call 911. If you are unsure of whether something is an emergency, err on caution and call 911.

Adults in the family should be trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). It is performed to restore and maintain breathing and circulation and to provide oxygen and blood flow to the heart, brain and other vital organs. CPR can save the life of victims of respiratory or cardiac arrest as a result of drowning, heart attack or other causes. CPR training is available through the local chapters of the American Red Cross at [RedCross.org/Take-a-Class/CPR](http://RedCross.org/Take-a-Class/CPR) or through the American Heart Association at [CPR.Heart.org](http://CPR.Heart.org).

## In Case of Emergency

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1. Check the scene for safety. If the person is in the water, remove them if it is safe to do so.
2. Have someone call 9-1-1 and bring the phone to the person's side if possible (the dispatcher may instruct you how to perform CPR). It is advisable to have a mobile/cordless telephone available in the pool or spa/hot tub area.
3. The person calling 9-1-1 activates the emergency response system and will be asked a series of questions such as the address or location of the incident. The dispatcher will provide the caller with instructions.

**WAS NOTED IN OLDER EDITS -  
WHERE/HOW TO ADD THIS:  
Pg 18 first column middle: include  
Canadian Red Cross and St. John  
Ambulance**

## Lifesaving Equipment

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Plan ahead for potential emergency situations by owning and being familiar with basic lifesaving equipment and procedures. Have at poolside a device such as a solid pole or a rope that can provide immediate assistance to a person in trouble. Make sure that any flotation rescue equipment used is Coast Guard approved, such as a type III life jacket or ring buoy. In Canada Lifesaving equipment must be approved by Transport Canada or Canadian Coast Guard or Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Practice using these devices correctly to be ready in an emergency. Use these devices only for emergencies. Do not allow children to play with lifesaving equipment.

Lifesaving equipment should be stored in a location that is visible and readily available to users of the pool. If proper equipment is not available in an emergency situation, throw something floatable (e.g., styrofoam toys or boards, etc.) into the pool for the person to grab onto until help arrives or until he or she gets to the side of the pool.



Intex Recreation Corp.

## Automatic Pool Cleaners

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Automatic pool cleaners, vacuums or robots, especially those which use a hose, cable or cord, should be removed from the pool completely before swimmers enter the pool. This removes the potential for entanglement in the cleaning system while swimming and helps prevent injury or drowning.

Children swimming in a pool with a cleaner present or in use may confuse it with a pool toy and attempt to play with the cleaner, increasing chances of entanglement.

## Other Pool Equipment

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Other pool maintenance equipment, such as poles, brushes, leaf rakes, skimmers, chemical floats, etc. should be removed from the pool and from the immediate pool area and safely stored when swimmers are in the pool. This prevents injury from tripping and hitting equipment while swimming or playing. Children can confuse equipment for toys and can therefore become exposed to high chemical concentrations.

## Chemical Handling

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The chemicals needed for your pool help to make it clean, safe and more attractive to use. But remember that these chemicals are potentially dangerous and may present some hazards if not used properly. Carefully follow the manufacturer's instructions for the use and storage of chemicals.

- **Use an EPA-registered sanitizer and follow the use directions on the label to protect against the spread of infection. Do not assume that because the water is clear that it has been properly sanitized. Periodically check the sanitizer levels to ensure that they are maintained according to the label directions.**
- Keep the pool clean and clear of debris. For safety's sake, swimmers and supervisors must be able to clearly see the bottom drain or bottom of the pool so as to be able to make intelligent decisions about pool use.
- Keep the pool filled to its proper level. Periodically check the water levels.
- When opening your pool each year, have the water professionally tested to ensure safe water quality and replace the test kit reagents.
- Never add chemicals to the pool water while swimmers are using the pool.
- **Always read and follow label instructions.** Always add chemicals directly to water. If it is necessary to pre-dissolve the chemical, put water in the pail first, then add the chemical. If the directions call for pre-dissolving a dry chemical in a pail of water, be sure to only add chemicals from a single package. Do not add chemicals from different packages. Adding chemicals from different packages can result in the mixing of incompatible chemicals, which can lead to fire, explosion or release of toxic gases.

- Never mix two chemicals together. Use a clean dry scoop for each chemical. Never combine material from “old” and “new” containers. Do not return a wet scoop to the chemical container.
- When preparing water solutions for feeder application (e.g., disinfectant or soda ash), pour the chemical slowly into the appropriate amount of water, stirring constantly to provide mixing and dilutions. Do not stir with your hands—use a clean, dry, non-metallic utensil.
- Carefully clean up any spilled chemicals according to the label directions. Check with local authorities before sending any chemicals to the sewer as waste. Do not put spilled material back in the original container.
- To eliminate risk of fire, explosion or poisoning, rinse empty disinfectant containers thoroughly with water before disposing of them.
- Test the water in your pool with a reliable test kit on a schedule specified by the sanitizer label or as recommended by your pool professional. Regularly have your pool water thoroughly tested by a professional pool care specialist, such as at a pool and spa specialty store. They can test for chemical levels and conditions not usually available in most residential water test kits. As a general rule, this should be done monthly, in order to ensure proper water balance and to avoid destruction of pool equipment or unnecessary use of chemicals. The more people who use your pool, the more frequently you should test the water. Add the necessary chemicals according to the test results and the manufacturer’s instructions.
- Chemicals for test kits should be replaced each year.
- Do not inhale dust or fumes from any pool chemicals. If necessary, use protective devices for breathing, handling, and eye protection. Promptly wash off any residues that get on your skin.
- Never reuse old chemical containers.
- If you have any questions regarding safe handling, storage, or use of pool chemicals, contact the manufacturers.

## Storage

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- NEVER consolidate chemicals from separate partial containers into a single container because this practice can lead to mixing of incompatible chemicals (e.g., different types of chlorinating agents). Fire, explosion, release of toxic gases, injury and property damage can result from mixing incompatible chemicals.
- Read the labels and directions carefully before using chemicals. Follow label instructions for use, storage, spill and disposal of pool chemicals.
- Keep all chemicals out of the reach of children. Do not allow children to handle pool and spa chemicals. They are usually poisonous and highly reactive. They can easily cause severe chemical burns to skin, mucous membranes and eyes.
- Burns/Fires — Chemicals needed for clean, sanitized water are potentially harmful when improperly stored or used. If mixed with other chemicals or elements, explosions and fire can occur. Read the label and follow manufacturer’s instructions!

- Keep the original lids on all chemical containers and make sure the lids are closed tightly when not in use.
- Do not stack different chemicals on top of one another.
- Store your pool chemicals in a clean, cool, dry, well-ventilated area preferably off the floor, to prevent contamination from other materials. Especially do not store chemicals near the pool heater. Keep them away from chemicals and equip-
- When carrying swimming pool chemicals in your vehicle, ensure that they cannot spill into each other or come into contact with each other, in case of accident or rupture of a container. Violent chemical reactions and release of poisonous gasses can result. A better idea is to never purchase reactive chemicals such as chlorine and acid at the same time.
- Wash your hands thoroughly after using chemicals.

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*Don't guess with chemicals. Before using, read the labels and follow directions carefully. Be sure to store them properly.*

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ment used for garden and lawn maintenance. Keep acids away from other chemicals.

- Keep liquid chemicals away from dry chemicals. Keep apart chemicals that are different forms of oxidizing compounds. Physically separate all different forms of chemicals.
- Do not store your pool chemicals where other flammable items may mix with them. For example, a mixture of pool chemicals and fertilizer can cause a fire or explosion.
- If diluting liquid acid to add into the pool, ALWAYS add Acid into Water, never Water into Acid. A good rule to remember is "alphabetical order: A into W." Adding water to acid can cause violent reactions and injury.
- Before working with any electrical equipment, make sure the electricity is turned off at the circuit breaker or fuse box.
- **Make sure that there are no electrical outlets within 6 feet of the pool and that all electrical outlets near the pool are protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs).** GFCIs are designed to prevent electrical shock. They are a kind of "fail safe" device that can shut off electrical current in fractions of seconds. Ask a licensed electrician for more details.
- If you have any frayed cords, loose connections, sparking or arcing, turn off the power at the circuit breaker and call for a licensed electrician.
- Have a licensed electrician inspect and test all equipment prior to initial operation and before each season.
- Never replace bulbs for underwater lights yourself. Get an expert to do this for you.

## Electrical Maintenance

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Here are some general safety rules and precautions for electrical maintenance:

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*Working with electricity is a job best left to the experts.*

*Don't take chances.*

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- Do not let water accumulate on floor or deck areas where electrical switches are located.
- Do not stand in water while operating electrical components.
- To safely use electricity in and around your pool, you must have equipment expressly designed for this purpose. **Consult with a licensed electrician for help in equipping your pool side area correctly for electricity.** Ask the licensed electrician to be aware of any local electrical codes that apply in your area. Ensure that your pool and its equipment are designed and installed to conform to the National Electrical Code or Canadian Electrical Code for pools and related equipment. Electrical work, especially in wet areas, is not for “do-it-yourselfers” or other amateurs. Contract with a licensed electrician to make sure that all of your outside electrical lines (not just those for the pool, its equipment and accessories but also for other appliances used outside as well) are protected by ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs). GFCIs are designed to help protect against the hazards of electrical shock.

- If you are installing your own pool, it is your responsibility to make certain that all work performed complies with the National Electrical Code or Canadian Electrical Code and all other applicable codes and regulations.

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## Recommended Use of Professionals

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**For your protection, only pool professionals, licensed electricians, gas fitters, builders, carpenters or other appropriate experts should perform the following services:**

- Selection, installation and servicing of electrical equipment, heaters and filters.
- Inspection and replacement of vinyl liners.
- Building of walls, fences and other barriers as layers of protection.
- Annual inspection of all pool equipment and accessories.
- Replacement and repair of electrical wires and pool light apparatus.
- Search for a PHTA member professional in your area, visit [PHTA.org/MemberLocator](http://PHTA.org/MemberLocator).



## Notice to Parents and Pool Owners

Parents and pool owners: The lives and health of you, your family, as well as your friends and neighbors are important. Please practice safety and supervise your pool. Review the safety information in this booklet with your children and any children that use the pool. It is your responsibility to enforce the rules of safety.

A good exercise would be to have each of your children and the other pool users who reside with you read this booklet and sign in one of the spaces indicated below. This will help you enforce the rules since you can always refer back to their promise reflected by their signature.

We, the undersigned, have read this safety booklet. We understand what it says and we promise to follow the rules of safety and to use our common sense.

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## Additional Consumer Safety Information

The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA) offers many publications and materials to help you enjoy your pool. Visit [PHTA.org](http://PHTA.org) to access free water safety brochures.

### CONTACT:

Pool & Hot Tub Alliance  
2111 Eisenhower Avenue, Suite 500  
Alexandria, VA 22314  
[PHTA.org](http://PHTA.org)

### Consumers may also wish to visit:

Centers of Disease Control and Prevention:  
[CDC.gov/HealthyWater/Swimming/](http://CDC.gov/HealthyWater/Swimming/)

U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission:  
[PoolSafely.com](http://PoolSafely.com)

For more free consumer safety information, visit:

[PHTA.org](http://PHTA.org)

[CDC.gov/healthywater/swimming](http://CDC.gov/healthywater/swimming)

[DivingBoardSafety.net](http://DivingBoardSafety.net)

[PoolSafely.gov](http://PoolSafely.gov)

[Safepools.ca](http://Safepools.ca)



**POOL &  
HOT TUB  
ALLIANCE**

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## About PHTA

The Pool & Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA) is the world's oldest and largest association representing swimming pool, hot tub and spa manufacturers, distributors, manufacturers' agents, designers, builders, installers, suppliers, retailers and service professionals. Dedicated to the growth and development of its members' businesses and to promote the enjoyment and safety of pools and spas, PHTA offers a range of services including professional development through PHTA University, advocacy at the federal and local levels, consumer outreach and public safety awareness. For more information, visit [PHTA.org](http://PHTA.org).

**Warning:** *There is no substitute for constant, competent adult supervision in the swimming pool environment Lives depend on you!*