

Monday, 17 December 2012

MEDIA RELEASE



Swimming Pool Safety warning

Bland Shire Council has issued an important summer safety warning to all home pool owners.

A number of children in New South Wales tragically drown in backyard swimming pools each year and to help avoid such a tragedy in the Bland Shire, Council is reminding pool owners about their legal responsibilities and obligations.

Private or 'backyard' swimming pool safety is legislated by the Swimming Pools Act 1992 and the Swimming Pools Regulation 2008 and serious penalties ranging from \$550 to \$5500 apply for non compliance with the Act.

The Act was introduced to improve pool safety for children. However, laws requiring pool barriers and warning notices are just one part of pool safety. Also crucial are maintaining the pool barrier, keeping entry points secure, appropriate adult supervision, teaching young children to swim and resuscitation (CPR) training.

If you are the owner of premises on which a swimming pool is situated you must ensure that the pool is at all times surrounded by a child-resistant barrier consisting of fencing of a height no less than 1.2 metres (1.8 metres if a boundary fence) and/or your house wall. You must always keep your barrier, gates and doors in good working condition. Doors and gates providing access to the pool area must be kept securely closed at all times when not in actual use.

The requirements for child-resistant barriers on premises where there is a residential building vary according to when the pool was constructed and where the pool is located with a full explanation available at the Division of Local Government website at www.dlg.nsw.gov.au

All pool owners must display prominently the prescribed warning sign in the immediate vicinity of the swimming pool. The sign gives a supervision warning and the details of resuscitation techniques. The warning sign should be able to be read so it may need to be replaced from time to time if fading occurs.

To check if your pool meets the requirements of the Act, you should contact Bland Shire Council. Council can grant you a certificate of compliance if your swimming pool complies with the requirements of the Act.

If your pool does not comply with the requirements of the Act, then your council will advise you of the steps you need to take so that it does comply.

The Division of Local Government has released the following tips pool safety tips –

- Always keep your fence, gates, doors and window locks secure and in good condition. Regularly check them
- Always keep your gate and door latches and self-closing mechanisms in good working order
- Never leave climbable objects near the fence
- Always keep trees, shrubs and creepers trimmed well away from the fence

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- Always leave your filter covered so small children can't get into it and keep chemicals out of view and reach
- Always supervise children around the pool at all times. A fence is no substitute for responsible supervision
- Teach your children to swim from an early age, and
- Undertake resuscitation (CPR) training for emergency situations

For more information contact
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