



RELEASE OF NATIONAL GUIDANCE CONCERNING THE VIRGINIA GRAEME BAKER POOL AND SPA SAFETY ACT FOR PUBLIC POOL OWNERS, OPERATORS AND OTHER INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS

A rash of misinformation surrounds the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, which went into effect in December and requires public pools take steps to protect swimmers from drain entrapment. In the hope of clarifying the provisions of the law, the Pool Safety Council and Safe Kids USA are issuing the following guidelines that, if followed, will bring public pools into compliance quickly and affordably.

Before Opening in 2009:

- All public pools must install approved safety drain covers that meet ANSI/ASME A112.19.8-2007.
- All single drain public pools must install additional anti-entrapment devices such as a Safety Vacuum Release System, an automatic shut-off system, gravity drainage system, a suction-limiting vent system or disable the drain.
- Private pools are not currently required to comply with the Virginia Graeme Baker Act.
- Dual drains that are less than three feet apart are considered to be a single main drain under the Virginia Graeme Baker Act and therefore require additional layers of protection.

Myths Surrounding the Pool and Spa Safety Act:

One of the most persistent myths about the Pool and Spa Safety Act is that single drain public pools need to install a dual drain system. Not the case. The law only requires that single drain pools install approved anti-entrapment drain covers and use one of the other secondary layers of protection listed above. Dual drain pools only need to install approved safety drain covers to comply with the law, but PSC and Safe Kids strongly recommend all pools and spas, even private residential pools and spas, install both approved drain covers and an additional layer of protection. Finally, the law does not require public pools install new sumps.

State Laws:

Some states place additional requirements on public pool owners and operators with laws that extend beyond the federal Pool and Spa Safety Act. Please consult the appropriate local officials to find out what further requirements may apply in your area.

PSC and Safe Kids USA are committed to educating the public and helping officials at all levels of government comply with the Pool and Spa Safety Act. If you have any questions, please contact either the PSC at 1-877-222-4289 or Safe Kids USA at 202-662-0600.