

**BARRIERS FOR OUTDOOR POOLS
AND PERMANENTLY INSTALLED SPAS & HOT TUBS**
(2009 Virginia Construction Code (USBC-Part 1)/International Residential Code)

**ANY OUTDOOR STRUCTURE USED FOR SWIMMING OR RECREATIONAL
BATHING, CONTAINING WATER MEASURING OVER 24 INCHES IN DEPTH MUST
BE PROTECTED BY A BARRIER WHICH MEETS THE FOLLOWING
REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Top of barrier at least 48 inches above level which is opposite pool side. Maximum vertical clearance at bottom is 2 inches. Part or all of barrier may be pool structure such as walls of an above ground pool.
2. No opening shall allow a 4 inch sphere to pass through.
3. Solid barriers (masonry, stone) shall have no climbable surface. In open barriers with horizontal members less than 45 inches apart (top to top), no openings shall exceed 1.75 inches and the horizontal members shall be on the pool side.
4. Maximum mesh size for chain link fence is 1.25 inches unless slats are secured so that no opening is more than 1.75 inches.
5. If diagonal members are used, maximum opening size is 1.75 inches.
6. Pedestrian access gates must open away from the pool only and be self-closing and self-latching. If release is less than 54 inches from bottom of gate, it must be on pool side at least 3 inches below top of gate and no openings greater than .5 inch within 18 inches of the release.
7. If a building wall serves as part of the barrier, the following applies:
 - Provide powered safety cover which complies with ASTM F1346; **or**
 - Provide alarms listed per UL 2017 on all doors leading into pool area which produces an audible warning heard throughout the house when the door and screen, if present, is opened. Alarm shall activate within 7 seconds of door opening and sound continuously for at least 30 seconds; automatically reset; be equipped with touchpad or switch to temporarily deactivate alarm for single opening (such deactivation shall last for not more than 15 seconds and such switch shall be mounted at least 54 inches above the door threshold): **or**
 - Provide other protection such as in item #6 above (subject to approval).
8. Where the structure walls of an above ground pool is used as a barrier, any ladders must be capable of being secured, locked, removed or provided with barriers as above.
9. Barriers shall be so located that surrounding structures, equipment or similar objects cannot be utilized to gain access from outside the pool area.
10. Spas and hot tubs require no barrier if provided with a safety cover which complies with ASTM F1346.

NO PERMIT WILL BE ISSUED FOR THE PURPOSE OF INSTALLING A POOL, SPA OR HOT TUB UNTIL A BARRIER PLAN HAS BEEN SUBMITTED AND APPROVED. A SEPARATE PERMIT IS REQUIRED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF A POOL BARRIER. THE POOL AND BARRIER PERMITS MAY BE COMBINED WHEN THE INSTALLATION IS BEING DONE BY THE SAME COMPANY OR INDIVIDUAL. FINAL APPROVAL WILL NOT BE GIVEN PRIOR TO THE INSTALLATION OF THE REQUIRED BARRIER.