

SWIMMING POOLS

A common way to beat the heat is a swimming pool. This may be the answer in keeping tempers and the kids cool and happy during these searing days of summer! If you are considering putting in a swimming pool here are a few things to keep in mind.

- Because they can be attractive and dangerous to young children, in-ground and above ground pools need to be surrounded by a fence or other protective barrier. Small, inflatable pools must also be protected. The Connecticut Building Code states that any pool that can hold 24 inches of water has to have a four-foot fence or other barrier around it. Any gates in the fence must be self-closing and self-latching.
- Start at your Municipal Building Department for information that you will need after you've decided on the type of pool you're most interested in, i.e. above ground, in-ground, permanent, spa all defined terms the Building Code uses to determine safety equipment requirements.
- Where you can put the pool will depend on not only how large or small your property is but what side and rear yard building setback requirements are in your particular zone.
- The Building Dept. has a handout that will answer most frequently asked questions and more specific information related to fencing and gates. This, along with a look at your plot plan and a few minutes of time with the various department staff will make a seemingly complicated process easier to follow.
- Septic systems also affect where you may place your swimming pool. The local Health Department has application and setback requirements that protect your septic system.

A word of caution when buying a small self-supporting or wading pool, you know the ones that cost a few hundred dollars that are available at Wal-Mart or Home depot, the ones you throw in the trunk, take it home and fill it with the hose? Although they are a convenient and quick answer to a hot spell, they require a permit and a safety barrier of 48 inches in height with a myriad of details for gating and latching too long for this brief article.

If you get anything from reading this, I want it to be that swimming pools are well known as an attractive nuisance and kill small children every year. So please, if you have a pool, invite the building official over to check the compliance of the safety features to help minimize the risks of owning it.