

POOL SAFETY

Adult supervision is one of the best safety tips to help reduce the risk of drowning.

Other Important Tips for Parents to Follow:

- ✓ Never leave your children alone in or near the pool, even for a moment. An adult who knows CPR should actively supervise children at all times.
- ✓ Practice touch supervision with children younger than 5 years. This means that the adult is within an arm's length of the child at all times.
- ✓ You should put up a fence to separate your house from the pool. Most young children who drown in pools wander out of the house and fall into the pool. Install a fence at least 4 feet high around all 4 sides of the pool. This fence will completely separate the pool from the house and play area of the yard. Use gates that self-close and self-latch, with latches higher than your children's reach.
- ✓ Keep rescue equipment (such as a shepherd's hook or life preserver) and a telephone by the pool.
- ✓ Do not use air-filled "swimming aids" as a substitute for approved life vests.
- ✓ Remove all toys from the pool after use so children are not tempted to reach for them.
- ✓ After the children are done swimming, secure the pool so they cannot get back into it.
- ✓ A power safety cover that meets the standards of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) may add to the protection of your children but should not be used in place of the fence between your house and the pool. Even fencing around your pool and using a power safety cover will not prevent all drownings.

Moreover, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) warns consumers about hidden drowning hazards for small children in and around the home. Recent data show that a third as many children under age 5 (an average of about 115 annually) drown from other hazards around the home as drown in pools. Many of these deaths are associated with common household products. For example:

- About two-thirds of the drowning deaths in the home, not including pools, occur in bathtubs. Some of these bathtub drowning deaths happened when children were in bath seats or rings.
- 5-gallon buckets, often used for household chores, pose a serious threat to toddlers. Their tall, straight sides combined with their stability make it nearly impossible for top-heavy infants to free themselves when they topple in headfirst.
- Toilets are often overlooked as a drowning hazard in the home. The typical scenario involves a child under 3-years-old falling headfirst into the toilet.
- Spas and Hot Tubs pose another drowning hazard. A solar cover can allow babies to slip into the water while the cover appears to stay in place, hiding the child.