



Swimming Pool Requirements

This handout shall pertain to all residential swimming pools and spas. Per Appendix V of the 2019 California Residential Code, and the San Carlos Municipal Code Chapter 15.40 and 18.15.100, swimming pools are defined as any structure intended for swimming, dipping, immersion purposes by men, women, children or recreational bathing that contains water over 18 inches deep. This includes in-ground, above-ground and on-ground swimming pools, hot tubs and spas.

Swimming pools and spas shall comply with the following requirements, per the San Carlos Municipal Code Chapter 18.15.100:

- A. If located in a Residential District, the swimming pool or spa is to be solely for the use and enjoyment of residents and their guests.
- B. The swimming pool or spa, or the entire lot on which it is located, shall be walled or fenced from the street or from adjacent lots; and where located less than 30-feet to any lot line, shall be screened by a masonry wall or solid fence not less than six feet in height on the side facing such lot line.
- C. Swimming pool or spa filtration equipment shall not be closer than 15-feet to the main building on an adjoining lot.
- D. Swimming pool or spa filtration equipment and pumps shall not be located in the front or street side yard. All equipment shall be mounted and enclosed so that its sound is in compliance with Section 18.21.050 (Noise).
- E. The outside wall of the water-containing portion of any swimming pool or spa shall be located at least 5-feet from all interior side and rear lot lines.
- F. Swimming pools shall be built and maintained per the requirements of the California Building Code.

PERMIT SUBMITTAL REQUIREMENTS:

- 3 complete sets of plans (including plot plan) shall be submitted to the Building Division for plan review.
- Plot plan shall include all existing structures (primary residence, accessory structures, etc.), location of proposed pool or spa, all easements, and associated pool equipment.
- Provide pool equipment enclosure details with plan submittal.
- Plans shall include structural drawings and details, rebar size and layout.
- Provide complete pool or spa equipment specifications.
- Provide information on proposed perimeter safety barrier.

BARRIER REQUIREMENTS:

1. The top of the barrier shall be 60-inches above grade measured on the side of the barrier which faces away from the swimming pool. The maximum vertical clearance between grade and the bottom of the swimming pool barrier shall be 2-inches measured on the side of the barrier that faces away from the pool area.
2. The openings on the pool barrier shall not allow passage of a 4-inch diameter sphere.
3. Solid barriers which do not have openings, such as a masonry or stone wall, shall not contain indentations or protrusions except for normal construction tolerances and tooled masonry joints.
4. Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is less than 60-inches, the horizontal members shall be located on the swimming pool side of the fence. Spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 1 ¾ inches in width. Where there are decorative cutouts within vertical members, spacing within the cutouts shall not exceed 1 ¾ inches in width.

5. Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is 60-inches or more, spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 4-inches in width. Where there are decorative cutouts within vertical members, spacing within the cutouts shall not exceed 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in width.
6. Maximum mesh size for chain link fences shall be a 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch square unless the fence has slats fastened at the top and bottom which will reduce the openings to not more than 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
7. Where the barrier is composed of diagonal members, such as a lattice fence, the maximum opening formed by the diagonal members shall not be more than 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.
8. Access gates shall comply with items 1 – 7 from above and shall be equipped to accommodate a locking device. Pedestrian gates shall open outward away from the pool and be self-closing and have a self-latching device. Gates other than pedestrian access gates shall have a self-latching device. Where the release mechanism of the self-latching device is located less than 54-inches from the bottom of the gate, the release mechanism and openings shall comply with the following:
 - 8.1. The release mechanism shall be located on the pool side of the gate at least 3-inches below the top of the gate; and
 - 8.2. The gate and barrier shall have no opening larger than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch within 18-inches of the release mechanism.
9. Where a wall of a dwelling serves as part of the barrier, one of the following conditions shall be met:
 - 9.1. The pool shall be equipped with a powered safety cover in compliance with ASTM F 1346; or
 - 9.2. Doors with direct access to the pool through that wall shall be equipped with an alarm which produces an audible warning when the door and / or its screen, if present, are opened. The alarm shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 2017. The deactivation switch(es) shall be located at least 54-inches above the threshold of the door; or
 - 9.3. Other means of protection, such as self-closing doors with self-latching devices, which are approved by the governing body, shall be acceptable as long as the degree of protection afforded is not less than the protection afforded by Item 9.1 or 9.2 described above.
10. Where an above-ground pool structure is used as a barrier or where the barrier is mounted on top of the pool structure, and the means of access is a ladder or steps:
 - 10.1. The ladder or steps shall be capable of being secured, locked or removed to prevent access; or
 - 10.2. The ladder or steps shall be surrounded by a barrier which meets the requirements of Items 1 – 9 from above. When the ladder or steps are secured, locked or removed, any opening created shall not allow the passage of a 4-inch diameter sphere.

INDOOR SWIMMING POOLS: Walls surrounding an indoor swimming pool shall comply with Item 9 above.

PROHIBITED LOCATIONS: Barriers shall be located such to prohibit climbing of permanent structures, equipment, or similar objects.

BARRIER EXCEPTIONS: Spas or hot tubs with a safety cover which complies with ASTM F 1346 shall be exempt from the provisions of the barrier requirement listed above.

ENTRAPMENT PROTECTION FOR SWIMMING POOL AND SPA SUCTION OUTLETS: Suction outlets shall be designed and installed in accordance with ANSI/APSP-7.

Whenever a building permit is issued for construction of a new swimming pool or spa, or any building permit is issued for remodeling an existing pool or spa, at a single-family residence, the Building Division will require all pool barriers and gates to comply with the above requirements.

Contact the Building Division, at 650-802-4261, if you have questions.