

Township of Abington
Phone 267-536-1000 - Monday-Friday 7:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Swimming Pool Requirements
Zoning Ordinance No. 1753

An artificial or man-made container of water capable of being filled to a depth exceeding twelve (12) inches at the lowest point. Wading pools are exempt from the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance and are considered temporary pools if made of plastic, light metal, or other light duty materials which do not exceed a full volume depth of twelve (12) inches at the lowest point, and which are completely emptied of water when not in use.

- a. Permanent swimming pools, whether above or below ground, are required to meet the zoning district requirements with respect to lot coverage, and are considered impervious structures.
- b. As accessory structures, they are not permitted to be located closer than ten (10) feet to a side or rear property line, and must not be located closer than ten (10) feet from any additional structures, either primary or accessory, located on the lot or premises.
- c. Swimming pools are not permitted in the front yard restricted area or within approved swale or storm water management system.
- d. Building, electrical and plumbing permits are required for the installation, alteration, repair or remodeling of all pools not exempt from the Zoning Ordinance and must meet the code requirements of all applicable Township Ordinances.
- e. Swimming pools must be discharged according to guidelines established by the Department of Environmental Protection.
- f. Approved circulators and filtration systems must be provided for all pools except wading pools.
- g. Elevated outdoor lighting, if used, shall be installed with glare shields and not directed toward adjacent property owners.
- h. Water contained in swimming pools must be kept healthy and sanitary at all times, and shall not emit an offensive odor that creates a nuisance or unhealthy condition.
- i. No pool shall be located under or within (10) vertical feet of a power or service entry line.
- j. Abandoned pools must be removed and the depression in the yard must be filled with clean fill and compacted to match the existing grades.
- k. Above-ground pools may be installed without a survey and engineered grading plan if permitted by the Code Enforcement Official, where steep slope areas are not present. In-ground pools require an engineered plot plan with grading approved by the Township Engineer.
- l. Spas or health pools shall meet the same requirements as swimming pools, except when less than ten (10) feet in width and located on an existing deck or elevated patio adjoining the principal structure, the ten (10) foot separation from structures shall not apply.
- m. Cabana's or pool houses shall be permitted provided they are separated from the pool water edge and adjoining property lines and other accessory structures by a minimum of ten (10) feet. They must be single-story structures, not exceeding fourteen (14) feet in height, and may not contain permanent cooking equipment.
- n. The provisions of this chapter shall control the design of barriers for residential swimming pools, spas and hot tubs. These design controls are intended to provide protection against potential drownings and near-drownings by restricting access to swimming pools, spas, and hot tubs.

Outdoor Swimming Pool - an outdoor swimming pool, including an in-ground, above-ground or on-ground pool, hot tub or spa shall be provided with a barrier which shall comply with the following:

1. The top of the barrier shall be at least 48 inches (1219 mm) 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 barrier shall be 2 inches (51 mm) measured on the side of the barrier which faces away from the swimming pool. Where the top of the pool structure is above grade, such as an above-ground pool, the barrier may be at ground level, such as the pool structure, or mounted on top of the pool structure. Where the barrier is mounted on top of the pool structure, the maximum vertical clearance between the top of the pool structure and the bottom of the barrier shall be 4 inches (102 mm).

2. Openings in the barrier shall not allow passage of a 4-inch diameter (102 mm) 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 45 inches (1143 mm), the horizontal members shall be located on the swimming pool side of the fence. Spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 1.75 inches (44 mm) in width. Where there are decorative cutouts within vertical members, spacing within the cutouts shall not exceed 1.75 inches (44 mm) in width.
5. Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is 45 inches (1143 mm) or more, spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 4 inches (102 mm). Where there are decorative cutouts within vertical members, spacing within the cutouts shall not exceed 1.75 inches (44mm) in width.
6. Maximum mesh size for chain link fences shall be a 2.25-inch (57 mm) square unless the fence is provided with slats fastened at the top or the bottom which reduce the openings to not more than 1.75 inches (44 mm).
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 1.75 inches (44 mm).
8. Access gates shall comply with the requirements of I.C.C. Code AG105.2, Items 1 through 7, and shall be equipped to accommodate a locking device. Pedestrian access gates shall open outward away from the pool and shall 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 (1372 mm) 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 (76 mm) below the top of the gate, and
 - 8.2 The gate and barrier shall have no opening greater than 0.5 inch (12.7 mm) within 18 inches (457 mm) 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 F1346; or
 - 9.2 All 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 its screen, if present, are opened. The alarm shall sound continuously for a minimum of 30 seconds immediately after the door is opened and be capable of being heard throughout the house during normal household activities. The alarm shall automatically reset under all conditions. The alarm system shall be equipped with a manual means, such as touchpad or switch, to temporarily de-activate the alarm for a single opening. Such de-activation shall last for not more than 15 seconds. The de-activation switch(es) shall be located at least 54 inches (1372 mm) 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 so 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, then:

- 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 Section AG105.2, Items 1 through 9. When the ladder or steps are secured, locked or removed, any opening created shall not allow the passage of a 4-inch diameter (102 mm) sphere.

Indoor Swimming Pool - all walls surrounding an indoor swimming pool shall comply with I.C.C. Section AG105.2, Item 9.

Prohibited Locations - barriers shall be located so as to prohibit permanent structures, equipment or similar objects from being used to climb the barriers.

Barrier Exceptions - Spas or hot tubs with a safety cover which complies with I.C.C. Code ASTM F1346, as listed in Section AG107, shall be exempt from the provisions of this appendix.

Swimming Safety Tips

- Don't be tempted to leave your child alone in the bath or by the pool, even if for a short time;
- Let the phone or doorbell ring until you can take your child with you;
- Make sure your swimming pool is adequately fenced or covered with a net. Gates should be self-closing;
- Train your child in survival skills such as floating or treading in water;
- Ensure that your child is constantly supervised, even if they can swim like fish.