Permit Review Checklist
Swimming Pools 780 CMR 421.0

Permit Review Checklist

Softside Inflatable Pools
Soft side inflatable swimming pools offer an affordable, quick and manageable alternative to traditional above ground pools. However, soft side pools present an immediate safety danger to young children. The soft climbable sides lack the necessary barrier protection required by law to prevent unauthorized access into the pool. The installation of additional barrier protection in the form of fence and ladder enclosure is required for this type of swimming pool.

Private Swimming Pools
Swimming pools intended to be used in connection with an occupancy in Use Group R-3 & R-4 (one and two family dwellings) and which is available only to the family and guest of the household.

Public, Semi-Public Swimming Pool
Swimming pools intended to be used by the general public not in connection with Use Groups R-3 & R-4. Refer to Chapter 4, §421.0 of the Massachusetts State Building Code for additional code requirements.

Required Inspections
Required inspections will be noted on the permit card along with contact telephone numbers. Please note that concealment of structural components or utility lines prior to inspection shall result in a delay of the project until said component is exposed for inspection.

Pool Egress
At least one means of egress shall be provided from private pools. Steps shall be slip resistant with handrails on both sides, except where there are not more than 4 steps or where the steps extend the full width of the side or end of the pool.

Water Supply
Pools shall be provided with potable water supply, free of cross connections with the pool or its equipment. (421.6)

Drainage System
Pools shall be so equipped to be emptied completely of water and discharge shall be designed in a manner that will not create a nuisance to adjoining property (421.6.2)

Rules for Pools

- Instruct babysitters about potential pool hazards to young children and about the use of protective devices, such as door alarms and latches. Emphasize the need for constant supervision.
- Never leave a child unsupervised near a pool. During social gatherings at or near a pool, appoint a “designated watcher” to protect young children from pool accidents. Adults may take turns being the “watcher.” When adults become preoccupied, children are at risk.
- If a child is missing, check the pool first. Seconds count in preventing death or disability. Go to the edge of the pool and scan the entire pool, bottom and surface, as well as the pool area.
- Do not allow a young child in the pool without an adult.
- Do not consider young children to be drowned proof because they have had swimming lessons. Children must be watched closely while swimming.
- Do not use flotation devices as a substitute for supervision.
- Learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). Babysitters and other caretakers, such as grandparents and older siblings, should also know CPR.
- Keep rescue equipment by the pool. Be sure a telephone is poolside with emergency numbers posted nearby.
- Remove toys from in and around the pool when it is not in use. Toys can attract young children to the pool.
- Never prop open the gate to a pool barrier.

NOTE: To obtain detailed barrier recommendations, write CPSC; Pool Barriers, Office of Information & Public Affairs, Washington, DC 20207. For more information, call the CPSC’s toll-free hotline at 1-800-638-2772 or visit its website at http://www.cpsc.gov.
421.10.1 Outdoor private swimming pool: An outdoor private 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 finished ground level measured on the side of the barrier which faces away from the swimming pool.

2. Openings in the barrier shall not allow passage of a four-inch (102 mm) diameter sphere.

3. Maximum mesh size for chain link fences shall be a 1 ½ inch (32 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 ½ inches (44 mm). Decorative cutouts shall not exceed 1 ¾ inches (44 mm) in width.

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 13/8 inches (44 mm) in width. Decorative cutouts shall not exceed 1 ¾ 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). Decorative cutouts shall not exceed 1 ¾ inches (44 mm) in width.

6. Access gates shall comply with the requirements of 780 CMR 421.10.1 items 1 through 7, and shall be equipped to accommodate a locking device. Pedestrian access gates shall open outwards 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) above the threshold of the gate;

7. Where the barrier is composed of diagonal members, such as a lattice fence, the maximum opening formed by the diagonal members shall be not more than 1 ¾ inches (44 mm).

8. Where a wall of a dwelling serves as part of the barrier, one of the following shall apply:

9.1. 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 audible warning shall commence not more than seven seconds after the door and screen door, if present, are opened and shall sound continuously for a minimum of 30 seconds. The alarm shall have a minimum sound pressure rating of 85 dBA at ten feet (3048 mm) and the sound of the alarm shall be distinctive from other household sounds such as smoke alarms, telephones and door bells. The alarm shall automatically reset under all conditions. The alarm shall be equipped with manual means, such as touchpads or switches, to deactivate temporarily the alarm for a single opening from either direction. Such deactivation shall last for not more than 15 seconds. The deactivation touchpads or switches shall be located at least 54 inches (1372 mm) above the threshold of the door.

9.2. The pool shall be equipped with an approved power safety cover.

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 fixed or removable ladder or steps, the ladder or steps shall be surrounded by a barrier which meets the requirements of 780 CMR 421.10.1 items 1 through 9. A removable ladder shall not constitute an acceptable alternative to enclosure requirements.