

Swimming Pools a Liability Risk for Homeowners

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Along with the joy that backyard barbeques, ballgames and long bike rides bring come the safety precautions that we must be conscious of when participating in these and other summertime activities. In fact, safety should be the first thing on the mind of homeowners as they begin to fill up their swimming pools.

Responsibility Lies with the Homeowner

An average of ten non-boating drowning deaths occur in the U.S. every day and roughly half of those involve children under the age of 14, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). In fact, drowning is the leading cause of accidental death among children 1-4 years of age.

Any homeowner who owns or is considering installing a swimming pool must be aware that regardless of the circumstances surrounding a pool-related accident, liability falls squarely upon their shoulders. Although many pool owners are extremely vigilant and oriented towards the safety of their swimming guests, numerous accidental drowning cases will still end up on the desk of a personal injury lawyer or a wrongful death attorney each year.

Most homeowners are acutely aware that attentive adult supervision is always necessary around the pool, especially when young children are involved. But as the CDC points out, many drownings occur "after hours" when a child may wander out into a pool area unbeknownst to those in the home.

Accident Prevention

There are effective measures that a pool owner can take in order to prevent after-hours accidents from occurring. These include installing firm, secure covers whenever a pool is not in use and self-closing gates where the latch is too high for a child to reach.

Additionally, law firms are presented with a number of cases each year which involve children who have been sucked in or trapped by open pool drains and filtration systems. Therefore, a number of states are beginning to establish a law which requires the installation of protective drain and pool filter covers.

Pools provide hours of splashing, cooling fun and are many times the centerpieces of our summer parties and events. But pool ownership brings with it a great deal of responsibility and every precaution must be taken to ensure a safe environment on a 24/7 basis.