



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS
Building Inspection Division

September 26, 2001

MEMORANDUM

BULLETIN SP03-01

To: All Swimming Pool Contractors

From: Thomas H. Goldsbury, P.E., C.B.O.
Chief, Building Inspection Division

Subject: **New Swimming Pool Code**

Section 424 of the new Florida Building Code (FBC), **Swimming Pools and Bathing Places**, is very different from the City of Jacksonville's Swimming Pool Code in regards to barrier requirements for residential swimming pools. In August of 2001, section 424 was changed even further, so if you have a copy of the 2001 FBC, I suggest you get a copy of the rule changes that passed on August 28, 2001.

I will attempt to bring to your attention here some of the major differences between the requirements of the FBC and the requirements you have been following from Chapter 328, Swimming Pool Code, of the City's Municipal Ordinance. **My list is not all inclusive.** Keep in mind, come January 1, 2002, we have no choice, we all come under the FBC.

1. Section 424.17.1.11 states that "The barrier must be placed around the perimeter of the pool and must be separate from any fence, wall, or other enclosure surrounding the yard...". The pool perimeter is defined, "A pool perimeter is defined by the limits of the pool deck and any dwelling or non-dwelling wall or combination thereof which completely surrounds the pool". Therefore, if the pool is going in a fenced-in yard, where the pool deck does not extend to the fence, there will have to be an additional barrier placed inside the fence, around the pool.
2. The City's pool code allowed certain construction differences for existing fences. The FBC does not make any special allowance for existing fences.
3. The maximum size squares for chain link fence is 2 ¼ inch in the FBC compared to 2 ½ inch for the City code.
4. Access gates must have a self-latching locking device located no less than 54 inches from the bottom of the gate.
5. Where a wall of a dwelling serves as part of the barrier, one of the following shall apply:
 - a. All doors and windows providing access from the home to the pool shall be equipped with an exit alarm complying with UL 2017 that has a sound pressure rating of 85dba at 10 feet and is either hard wired or of plug-in type.

Exception: Screened or protected windows having a sill height of 48 inches. Windows facing the pool above the first story. Screened or protected pass-thru kitchen windows 42 inches or higher with a counter beneath.

- b. All doors providing direct access from the home to the pool must be equipped with a self

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closing, self latching device with positive mechanical latching/locking installed a minimum of 54 inches above the threshold.

I have attached a copy of section 424.2.17.1, Outdoor Swimming Pools, as it presently appears so that you may provide this to your customers. I strongly suggest that you get their acknowledgement of the requirements prior to starting construction.

Attachment:

Xc: Public Works
Jimmy Douglas

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Florida Building Code Section 424.2.17 Residential Swimming Pool Barrier Requirement

424.2.17. Outdoor Swimming Pools. Outdoor swimming pools shall be provided with a barrier complying with 424.2.17.1.1 through 424.2.17.1.14.

424.2.17.1.1 The top of the barrier shall be at least 48 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 barrier shall be 2 inches measured on the side of the barrier which faces away from the swimming pool. Where the top of the pool structure is above grade the barrier may be at ground level 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.

424.2.17.1.2 The barrier may not have any gaps, openings, indentations, protrusions, or structural components that could allow a young child to crawl under, squeeze through, or climb over the barrier as herein described below. One end of the barrier shall not be removable without the aid of tools. Openings in the barrier shall not allow passage of a 4-inch diameter sphere.

424.2.17.1.3 Solid barriers which do not have openings shall not contain indentations or protrusions except for normal construction tolerances and tooled masonry joints.

424.2.17.1.4 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, the horizontal members shall be located on the swimming pool side of the fence. Spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ 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.

424.2.17.1.5. Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is 45 inches or more, spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 4 inches. Where there are decorative cutouts within vertical members, spacing within the cutouts shall not exceed 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches in width.

424.2.17.1.6 Maximum mesh size for chain link fences shall be a 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ inch square unless the fence is provided with slats fastened at the top or bottom which reduce the openings to no more than 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

424.2.17.1.7 Where the barrier is composed of diagonal members, the maximum opening formed by the diagonal members shall be no more than 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches.

424.2.17.1.8 Access gates, when provided, shall comply with the requirements of 424.2.17.1.1 through 424.2.17.1.7 shall be equipped with a self-latching locking device located no less than 54 inches from the bottom of the gate. The device release mechanism shall be located on the pool side of the gate and so placed that it cannot be reached by a young child over the top or through any opening or gap. Gates that provide access to the swimming pool must open outward away from the pool. The gates and barrier shall have no opening greater than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch within 18 inches of the release mechanism.

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

1. All doors and windows providing direct access from the home to the pool shall be equipped with an exit alarm complying with UL2017 that has a minimum sound pressure rating of 85 DB A at 10 feet and is either hard-wired or of the plug-in type. The exit alarm shall produce a continuous audible warning when the door and its screen are opened. The alarm shall sound immediately after the door is opened and be capable of being heard throughout the house during normal household activities. The alarm shall be equipped with a manual means to temporarily deactivate the alarm for a single opening. Such deactivation shall last no more than 15 seconds. The deactivation switch shall be located at least 54 inches above the threshold of the door.

Exceptions:

- a. Screened or protected, windows having a sill height of 48".
 - b. Windows facing the pool in stories above the first story.
 - c. Screened or protected pass-through kitchen windows 42 inches or higher with a counter beneath.
2. All doors providing direct access from the home to the pool must be equipped with a self-closing, self-latching device with positive mechanical latching/locking installed a minimum of 54 inches above the threshold, which is approved by the authority having jurisdiction.

424.2.17.1.10 Where an aboveground 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, the ladder or steps shall be capable of being secured, locked or removed to prevent access, or the ladder or steps either shall be capable of being secured, locked or removed to prevent access, or the ladder or steps shall be surrounded by a barrier which meets the requirements of 424.2.17.1.1 through 424.2.17.1.9 and 424.2.17.1.12 through 424.2.17.1.14. When the ladder or steps are secured, locked or removed, any opening created shall not allow the passage of a 4 inch diameter sphere.

424.2.17.1.11 Standard screen enclosures which meet the requirements of section 424.2.17 may be utilized as part of or all of the "barrier" and shall be considered a "non-dwelling" wall.

READ CAREFULLY:

424.2.17.1.12 The barrier must be placed around the perimeter of the pool and must be separate from any fence, wall, or other enclosure surrounding the yard unless the fence, wall, or other enclosure or portion thereof is situated on the perimeter of the pool, is being used as part of the barrier, and meets the barrier requirements of this section.

424.2.17.1.13 The barrier must be placed sufficiently away from the water's edge to prevent a young child or medically frail elderly person who may manage to penetrate the barrier from immediately falling into the water. Sufficiently away from the water's edge shall mean no less than 20 inches from the barrier to the water's edge. Dwelling or non-dwelling walls, when used as part or all of the "barrier" and meeting the other barrier requirements, may be as close to the water's edge as permitted by this code.

424.2.17.1.14 A wall of a dwelling may serve as part of the barrier if it does not contain any door or window that opens to provide direct access from the home to the swimming pool.

424.2.17.1.15

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