**Requirements for Outdoor Residential Swimming Pools**

**When is a permit required?**

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code requires a building permit for any swimming pool that is larger than 150 square feet in surface area, holds over 5,000 gallons of water, or is 24 inches or more in depth. The code makes no distinction between in-ground, above-ground or inflatable pools, hot tubs or spas.

**What is the process?**

The process is simple but requires some coordination:

1. If applicable, check with your homeowners association to verify if a pool is permitted in your community.
2. Gather all of the necessary documents.
3. Submit the required permit applications.
4. Pay the required fees.
5. Wait for the permit to be issued.
6. Construct the pool and barrier including any required electrical installations.
7. Call for the required inspections prior to concealing work.

**What documents do I need?**

Three documents must accompany your permit application:

1. **Plot plan** — showing the proposed distances from the pool to all property lines, septic tank/drain field and the house. It is required to show compliance with the Zoning Department’s (804 693-4041) setback requirements. A survey plat with the pool location or a hand sketch showing the pool location with respect to the property lines and house is acceptable.

2. **Construction drawings** — two sets are required. Drawings for in-ground pools must include wall sections with size and spacing of reinforcing steel and be sealed by a Virginia registered design professional. Drawings for above-ground pools must include copies of the assembly instructions.

3. **Swimming Pool Barrier Affidavit** — you will be required to sign it. This is to acknowledge you understand all the requirements involved with installing a pool.

**What permits do I need?**

The following permits are required:

1. Pool permit
2. Electrical permit
3. Gas permit (if the pool, hot tub or spa will be heated by gas)

Notes:

- Existing barriers and electrical equipment will be required to be code compliant. If they are not a permit will be required to bring them into compliance.
- Be sure to check with the Zoning Department (693-4041) for setback and easement requirements for your property.

**Who should apply for the permit?**

Applying for a permit is an important decision because the permit holder(s) bears the ultimate responsibility that the work will comply with the code.

- For in-ground pools, we recommend the licensed pool contractor obtain the pool permit, but the homeowner may do so.
- For above-ground pools, the homeowner usually obtains the permit, unless a contractor is hired, who should then obtain the permit.
- The homeowner is encouraged to have a licensed electrical and, if applicable, gas contractor apply for the electrical and gas permits, however, the homeowner may do so.

When a homeowner is applying for any of these permits, the homeowner must review the code requirements fact sheet and sign a copy of the swimming pool affidavit acknowledging responsibility for coordinating the work and inspections. The final inspection for the pool permit will not be approved until the work for all permits is completed and the swimming pool barrier is installed.
What are the fees for the permits?

Information concerning fees is available by calling the Building Inspection Department at (804) 693-2744 and is subject to annual change.

How long does it take to get the permit?

When your construction documents are in order and you have received approval from all of these departments, a building permit and one set of Approved Field Plans will be mailed to you, or you may pick them up at the Building Inspection Department depending on the option you selected on the application form.

What are the entrapment protection requirements?

There are many specific electrical requirements for a pool based on the type and complexity of the installation. If you are unfamiliar or uncomfortable with these requirements, you are strongly encouraged to seek the services of a licensed electrical contractor. Below are a few of the basic requirements:

- **Power for circulation pumps, filtration system, etc.**
  - An accessible power disconnect shall be provided within sight of the pool equipment, not closer than 5 feet and not more than 10 feet from the pool.
  - All receptacle outlets shall be single, GFCI, locking and grounding type. They are not permitted closer than 5 feet from the pool.
  - Switches shall not be located within 5 feet of the pool unless separated by a fence or wall.

- **Convenience power (for lights, radios, etc):**
  - Power shall be provided by an accessible power disconnect at a minimum of 6 inches and not more than 12 inches below the minimum operational water level or an attachment to the skimmer(s).

- **Swimming pool barrier requirements of the code have also been satisfied by a permanent pool barrier.**

- **Swimming pools shall not be used until all required inspections of the pool, its barrier (fence or pool wall for an above-ground pool), and its associated electrical equipment have been approved.**

The following inspections are typically required:

- Pool footings inspection for in-ground pools
- Bonding-grounding inspection for in-ground pools
- Rough-in and final gas inspection, if applicable
- Final electrical inspection
- Barrier inspection and final building inspection. (May be performed together or separately)