



For 38 Years, The Voice Of The Pool & Spa Service Professional

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## A letter from your Pool Service Technician

Dear Pool Owner,

As the person who is in your backyard every week, I have an important message for you. This is a message that somehow isn't getting out there. It's a message that I am in a unique position to help spread.

I want to talk to you about water safety and drowning prevention. I know it's a difficult and heavy subject. I know that you don't want to think about drowning happening to someone you know, especially a loved one. Just thinking about it probably puts you into a panic. Just saying the word probably raises your blood pressure and gets your heart beating faster. I get it.

Maybe you never considered that I'm here for more than just to clean and maintain your pool. But as a human being, I think I have a responsibility to talk to you about pool safety. Kids running around, playing in the yard, and I have come to care about you and your family as my clients.

Your health and safety are important to me, and I'm here in your backyard doing everything I can think of to make sure that you have a clean, safe pool and a safe environment.

The last thing I want is to come to your pool one day and see that it's all covered up and see memorial flowers for someone who is lost.

You see, as a member of the pool and spa service profession, I try to stay up-to-date and educated. I learn about all sorts of industry best practices and other service-related news. What keeps coming up is the topic of



drowning prevention. I support that cause.

Did you know that drowning is the leading cause of death for children ages 1-4? Did you know that there are more than 3,500 fatal drownings in the U.S. every year? Did you know that even when people survive drowning, 50 percent of them go on to require further medical care? A lot of those people have permanent brain damage. Did you know that in California alone, there are currently more than 700 children living in state hospitals who are brain damaged from drowning?

This isn't meant to scare you, and I certainly don't want you to close your pool!

In fact, I encourage people to swim. Swimming is great exercise, and it's a lot of fun. People naturally gravitate toward water, and I'm happy for people who have the luxury of a backyard pool.

I take pride in keeping your water and equipment in great shape. I believe that part of my responsibility to you is to keep your water safe.

There are things you should know and things that you can do to create a safe pool area.

Every day, I see things that could be improved at people's pools.

So I hope you won't think I'm being forward if I tell you that we need to fix your gate latch. I hope you don't mind

if I leave you a note reminding you to move that stack of chairs that a child could use to climb over your fence. I care, and I don't want to imagine walking up to your pool next week knowing something bad happened there.

I believe that every pool owner has a responsibility to the community, and part of that is in educating themselves about pool safety.

So please accept this newspaper as a gift from me to you. It contains great information about pool safety that could help you save the life of a loved one.



# Layers of protections, barriers, alarms

The NDRPA and the Consumer Product Safety Commission advises pool owners to use layers of protection to prevent drowning in swimming pools and spas. These layers include a barrier or fence, at least 4-feet tall with self-closing, self-latching gates; a pool and spa cover; and an alarm or drowning detection system that can notify adults of unwanted intrusion into the pool area. All pools should be totally surrounded by a 4-sided fence. For residential pools, in most cases the house itself should not be considered one of the four sides, unless the doors and windows are secured with locks and alarms that warn of unwanted pool area entry. The locks and alarms on the doors and windows should be placed high, such that a small child cannot reach them, even with the assistance of a chair.



The doors and windows should also be of the self-closing and self-locking variety.

The barriers themselves can be made from a variety of materials,

(against, subject to local ordinances), although mesh fences are among the most popular.

Mesh fences are a popular choice because they are rust-free, transparent, custom-design friendly, and removable.

An additional layer of protection can be achieved by using pool and spa safety covers. It is important to note that not all pool covers are safety covers.

A true safety cover carries an ASTM label, signaling that the cover conforms to national standards. A further layer of protection includes alarms that warn of entry into the pool area or the pool itself.

There are several types of alarms. Experts recommend that homeowners install alarms at all windows, doors, and pool entrances. There is also a "perimeter awareness sensor," a device that detects motion in the pool area and sounds an alarm.

This kind of alarm will warn of unwanted intrusion into the pool area but not into the pool itself. There are two kinds of alarms that are actually inside the pool and can detect unauthorized entry.

Wristband sensors are also available to sound an alarm when a child enters the pool, but they rely on the fact that the child is actually wearing the wristband to begin with. When the sensor in the wristband becomes wet, a remote alarm is activated, warning the parent that the wristband has been exposed to water.

The National Drowning Prevention Alliance stresses that no single device or solution can prevent child drownings.

That means multiple strategies should be used at all times.

In addition to physical layers of protection, there are also layers of protection that can help minimize injury, such as constant, capable and undistracted supervision, teaching children water safety and swimming skills, learning proper rescue techniques, and knowing first Aid and CPR with rescue breaths.

Please visit [www.ndpa.org](http://www.ndpa.org) for free water safety and drowning prevention resources to help keep you and your family safer around water. remember: No matter what safety system is in use, there is no substitute for constant, undistracted and capable adult supervision any time a child is near a pool or any kind of water.

D & D Technologies, MagnaLatch ALERT is D&D's latest pool safety innovation, providing both audible and visual alarms if the gate is left open or not physically latched. Click the picture to visit D&D.



## Drowning statistics

- Each year, 4,000 people die from drowning in the United States.
- Drowning remains in the top 4 causes of unintentional death until age 55.
- Drowning is the leading cause of death among children aged 1-4. No other single cause of death kills more toddlers and young children.
- Drowning is the second leading cause of unintentional injury death among children 0-4.
- More than 88% of children 0-4 who drown with at least 1 adult present.
  - Nearly 70% of toddler drownings occur during non-swim time.
- Children and adults with autism and intellectual abilities are at a significantly higher risk of drowning.
- More than 60% of fatal drownings of 0-4-year-olds occur in swimming pools.
- For every child who dies from drowning, another 6-8 who receive emergency department care for nonfatal submersion injuries.
- More than 50% of drowning victims treated in emergency departments require hospitalization or transfer for further care (compared with a hospitalization rate of 15% for nonfatal drowning injuries).
- These non-fatal drowning injuries are brain damage that may result in long-term disabilities such as memory problems, learning disabilities, and permanent loss of basic functioning (e.g., permanent vegetative state).
  - Nearly 80% of people who die from drowning are male.
  - African-American children ages 5 to 19 drown in swimming pools at rates 5.5 times greater than those of Whites.
  - This disparity is greatest among those 11-12, where African-Americans drown in pools at rates 10 times those of Whites.

*Drowning Statistics from the CDC, Safe Kids Worldwide and the National Drowning Prevention Alliance, NDPA.*

# Get a safety cover and check drains

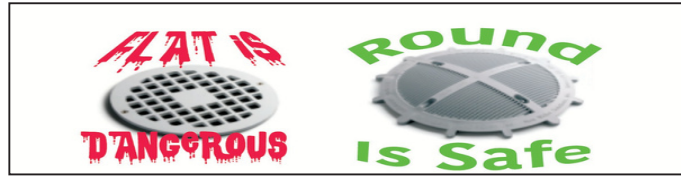
## Covers

There are pool covers, and there are safety pool covers. Pool covers are designed for a variety of purposes: they can keep debris out; they can keep the heat in; or they can help prevent evaporation. But safety pool covers are a class unto themselves. A safety cover shields the entire pool surface and is secured flush with the deck. These covers are designed to prevent unsupervised access to a pool or spa when it is not in use. To be considered a safety cover, it must meet the American Society for Testing Materials (ASTM) Standard F 1346-91.

## Drains

As pool owners prepare for the swimming season, they may be unaware of a hazard that may exist in their pools. Suction entrapment occurs when a body is held against a pool or spa drain by the force of the pool's suction or when an article of clothing, jewelry, hair or a limb is caught in a faulty drain.

The most recent much-publicized incident of suction entrapment took



the life of 8-year-old Aliyah Jaico, who was killed on March 23, 2024, while swimming with her family members in the lazy river swimming pool at the DoubleTree by Hilton Houston Brookhollow. Authorities said that she was sucked into the plumbing and that the pipe that she was pulled into had no grate, a violation of the Pool and Spa Safety Act that has made drain and plumbing covers mandatory in all public pools since 2008. One of the most important goals in keeping children and adults safe from entrapment incidents in pools and spas is to install an anti-entrapment or safety drain cover that is compliant with the Pool & Spa Safety Act.

The P&S Safety Act is one of the few federal laws applying to swim-

ming pools and is only enforced in public pools. The law was inspired by an entrapment incident that took the life of 7-year-old Virginia Graeme Baker, the granddaughter of former Secretary of State James Baker III. In June, 2002, Virginia became stuck to a hot tub drain and was unable to pull herself free. Efforts by her mother to pull Virginia from the drain proved unsuccessful. Two men who eventually freed the girl from the spa pulled so hard that the drain cover broke from the force. Virginia died from drowning, but the real cause of her death was suction entrapment due to a bad drain cover. Virginia's mother, Nancy Baker, worked tirelessly to advocate for pool and spa safety. Mrs. Baker, her family and Safe Kids Worldwide actively lobbied Congress to win support for a law to require

anti-entrapment drain covers (known as VGB-compliant covers) and other safety devices, as needed.

The statute was sponsored by U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida and signed into law by President George W. Bush in December, 2007. The law mandates that drains in public and hotel pools and hot tubs be covered with larger, rounded covers that do not create suction, and that there is a back-up mechanical system installed in those pools that have a single main drain.

Since the Virginia Graham Baker Act was signed into law, only 2 entrapment incidents have occurred in public swimming pools, according to the Consumer Product Safety Commission. Federal law does not require that residential pools have VGB-compliant drain covers, but the importance of replacing and protecting nonconforming drains cannot be overstated. Ask your pool and spa service professional if your pool's drain cover meets the guidelines of the P&S Safety Act.





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# Think out of the box about safety

**You can learn Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) from the comfort of your home for \$45 with the Adult & Child CPR Anytime® KIT.**

The American Heart Association's (AHA) Adult & Child CPR Anytime Kit contains everything you need to learn the lifesaving skills of CPR, use of an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), and choking relief in about 20 minutes. CPR Anytime allows you to learn in the comfort and privacy of your home or workplace. Plus, CPR Anytime is portable, so it is easy to share with family and friends. CPR Anytime kits also can be used to train small groups and community organizations.

- Product Specifications for the Adult & Child CPR Anytime Kit:**
- 1 bilingual (English/Spanish) Adult & Child CPR Anytime DVD.
  - 1 Mini Anne® CPR mannequin.
  - 1 bilingual Skills Reminder Card.
  - 1 Mini Anne replacement lung.



• Mannequin wipes.  
 Intended Audience: Adult & Child CPR Anytime is for anyone who wants to learn basic CPR skills, choking relief, and AED awareness, and does not need a course completion card to meet a job requirement.

**The American Academy of Pediatrics suggests starting swim lessons as young as at one-year of age.**  
 Swim lessons can provide an additional layer of protection around the water. These classes are not designed to replace constant adult supervision of children when around water. Swim lessons are a great first step.

There are many national lifeguard companies that will come and help ensure the safety of your pool party to provide parents with a little extra peace of mind.

**You can hire a lifeguard for your pool party**

It is easy to become distracted when there are a lot of people in and around the pool. Hosts giving parties can be sidetracked from supervision duties, preparing food and drink, socializing, and answering the door. You want everyone to have fun, but you know that drownings happen even in the midst of a crowded pool.

In fact, a crowded pool is more difficult to monitor. That's where a professional lifeguard comes in handy. Having a trained and alert individual watching out for those in the water can mean the difference between life and death.

# Check the pool gate and save a life

**By D&D Technologies**  
 Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional death in children ages 1 – 4 years, with an average of 11 fatal and 22 non-fatal drownings per day. In addition, 70 percent of child drownings happen during non-swim times. Children's curiosity naturally draws them to the backyard swimming pool, and the majority of children who drown most commonly gain access to the pool area through a faulty (or non-existent) fence or gate. The National Drowning Prevention Alliance (NDPA) has developed the 5 layers of protection to help reduce the risk of child drowning.

The first and most important layer is a barrier that limits access and an alarm to alert of any unplanned access to the pool area. Fencing provides a barrier that works 24/7, but a fence is only effective if the gate and gate hardware are in good working order — a properly functioning gate can help prevent drownings, and checking the pool gate is vital to drowning prevention. Only 30 percent of pool owners check their pool gate once a year. Recognizing the need to create awareness of this problem and provide education on how to check and maintain a pool gate, D&D Technologies has brought together the NDPA and several non-profit organizations to establish the Check Your Pool Gate Month beginning May 1.

Check Your Pool Gate Month was created to remind pool owners of the vital need to ensure pool fences, gates, latches and hinges are secure and in top working order, with the aim to reduce child drownings by making it harder for them to access the pool. Every pool owner should be confident they have a safe swimming zone. For every child who dies of drowning, another 7 experience a non-fatal drowning — 40 percent of these children require further care. A few minutes is all it takes for pool owners to check their pool fence and gate, and this simple routine done regularly could help save the life of a child.

**Safety Checklist for Pool Gates**

- Gate should open outwards, away from the pool.
- Gate latch release knob should be out of reach of children under 5. (Check local codes/standards from minimum requirements.)
- Fence should be at a minimum height, comply with your region and encompass the pool area. (Check local codes/standards from minimum requirements.)
- Maximum clearance from finished ground surface is no more than 4 feet (100 mm).
- Fence perimeter must have adequate distance from other climbable objects or structures.
- Gate must be self-closing and self-latching.

- Gate hinges are reliable, self-closing, tension-adjustable, rust free and bind free.
  - Gate latch must be adjustable for height and width.
  - Gate latch cannot be key locked in the "open" position.
  - Gate latch cannot be opened using implements or force.
  - Gate will shut and latch securely from any position, including from resting on the latching mechanism.
  - Gate complies with all relevant United States Codes/Standards and legislation for pool safety.
- The Pool and Fence industries play a critical role in the effort to save lives as they communicate directly with customers. A few important points to communicate to customers are the importance of checking the pool fence and gate on a regular basis to make sure all are in good working order — reminding the customer a gate that is not self-closing and self-latching provides instant and often undetected access to the pool area. Also, provide the items on the checklist to check and communicate the significance of installing the safest, most advanced latches and hinges available, considering the hardware's vital role in protecting children.
- The MagnaLatch® gate latch and TruClose® gate hinge, invented by D&D Technologies, meet all international and local pool safety

codes, as well as fulfill all the safety checklist's requirements. The MagnaLatch® is a reliable, adjustable and magnetically triggered self-latching safety gate latch. TruClose® are self-closing, adjustable, polymer safety gate hinges.

The MagnaLatch® ALERT is D&D's latest pool safety innovation, providing both audible and visual alarms if the gate is left open or not physically latched.

Pool owners can see at a glance and hear from a distance if their pool gate is not latched properly.

Together MagnaLatch and TruClose are the world's most trusted pool safety hardware system, having been installed on gates for more than 35 years and saving countless lives.

You are encouraged to support the 'Check Your Pool Gate Month' campaign by following D&D's social platforms and sharing their posts and by announcing the start of the campaign and posting the safety checklist for pool gates on your website.

For more information on pool safety and compliance visit: <https://us.ddtech.com/pages/national-check-your-pool-gate-month-consumer>, <https://us.ddtech.com/pages/pool-safety-compliance> and [www.ndpa.org](http://www.ndpa.org).

For more information on the Layer of Protection visit: <https://ndpa.org/layers/>.

# Learn from each other — Survival swimming

One of the things Nicole Hughes, mother of Levi, regrets is not teaching her son how to swim — or at least how to float. The family had been staying at a vacation rental with a pool when the 3-year-old somehow left a house full of people one evening and got in the pool. Levi died. Nicole and her husband are responsible parents. Her husband is a doctor and coaches softball. Nicole is a Girl Scout leader, a room mom, and an English teacher.

“How were years of intentional parenting seemingly nullified within seconds?” Nicole asks herself. Levi’s death, Nicole spent a lot of time thinking about how to raise healthy kids. She worried about sun exposure and sunscreen, smart phones and excess screen time, the merits of organic food, and cavities.

She also worried about drowning. Nicole has 16 photos of her son from the day he died, and he is wearing a life jacket in 14 of them.

The family had spent the day in the sun and on the water and had gone back to their vacation rental to have dinner. Nicole had just finished the dishes and had been drinking wine. Levi had been wearing a life vest all day, but he wasn’t wearing it then. Why would he?

“We weren’t drinking, weren’t on our phones, and had finished swimming for the day,” Nicole remembers. He got past a room filled with friends and family, a heavy front door, and a self-latching pool gate. Nicole still can’t understand it to the Consumer Product Safety Commission, 69 percent of kids who drown were in the water unexpectedly.

That’s a statistic that really bothers Nicole today. Now, she knows that drownings don’t always happen when you are wearing your swimsuit. They also happen when you are loading the car or looking for your casserole dish.

Levi always wore a life jacket when in the pool. And Nicole and her husband had done the research and were following what was then the American Academy of Pediatrics’ recommendation to wait until the age of 4 for formal swim lessons.

Today, Nicole believes in teaching infants how to survive just in case they find themselves alone in the water. Infant swim lessons are focused on simple survival skills, such as learning how to roll onto your back and float. It’s a very last layer



Nicole Hughes with her beautiful son Levi.

of protection if a child gets past all of the other barriers. “After Levi drowned, I heard about swim programs that taught babies how to float,” Nicole said. “Hundreds of parents reached out to me to

share their passionate testimonials of how these swim lessons saved their children. I was admittedly skeptical. However, as I continued to research pediatric drowning, I saw consistent factors: Children who drown usually loved water, they had relied on a flotation device when swimming in pools, and they did not know how to survive if they reached water alone.

“My perception of water shifted, and on the exact day that marked 20 months since Levi’s death, we handed over our 8-month-old daughter Willow, Levi’s little sister, to her first Infant Swimming Resource lesson. I watched her take on water and win. She was not just trained to float; she learned to roll her infant body, find the surface, and get air. Even beyond her ability to survive in water, Willow began to develop a lifetime respect for water.”

Levi’s death happened in a moment. One moment he was on the couch. The next, he was in the pool. In Levi’s case, having swim survival skills might have bought Nicole the scant moment she needed to save him.

Infant Survival Swimming (Intended as a box within Nicole’s Story)

Historically, formal swim lessons weren’t recommended until children were at least 4 or 5. But today, many experts advise that much younger children (infants) should be taught survival-swimming skills to provide one last layer of protection if they unexpectedly get in the water.

Early swim lessons teach basic survival skills, including the ability to:

- Right oneself after falling into the water.
- Proceed a short distance in the water, such as to the side of the pool.
- Float or tread water until someone can help.

Parents who choose this type of survival-swimming skills training — or regular swim lessons, for that matter — can find classes at their local YMCA, American Red Cross chapter, Infant Swimming Resource swim schools, and private swimming resource providers.

Experts consider learning survival-swimming skills to be the last layer of protection in keeping kids safe. If all of the other layers break down and a child ends up in the water, those survival-swimming skills may keep them from drowning until help arrives.

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# Turning a father's loss into change

“The worst day of my life is the day both my kids died,” said Paul Demello, who was then a father of three boys. “I lost my twin boys, Joshua and Christian, in a backyard swimming pool drowning.”

It happened on January 16, 2010. Demello had dropped off his 1-year-old sons for a visit at their grandparents’ house. The toddlers had been playing in the TV room — safe, or so everyone thought. But somehow, they made their way to the backyard, where an unfenced swimming pool awaited.

That’s where their mother found them.

It was a phone call that Demello will never forget.

“I remember hearing the screams,” he said. “Real loud screams.”

In an instant, his life was shattered. “It was one of those things I never saw happening,” he said. “And when it did happen, it rocked my world. I actually wanted to check out a lot of times. I cried a lot. That first year and a half, it was like someone cut my legs off. I just couldn’t get out of bed. I went to bed crying. I woke up crying.”

Joshua died immediately. But Christian lived for three days. In that short window, there was just enough time for his organs to be donated — a small comfort in the midst of unbearable loss.

Five days after Christian’s death, Demello received word that his son’s kidneys had saved the life of a 19-year-old woman. For Demello, the news was surreal — heartbreaking and healing all at once. “I was crying and smiling at the same time,” he said. “There was something about helping others — it’s almost like a therapy. That’s when I knew I had to do something. Anything. I wanted to turn all my pain into a gift for others.” That desire quickly turned into a mission.

“There were people who came up to me and said, ‘Hey, you remember Mothers Against Drunk Driving? Why don’t we do something about this?’ And that’s how Just Against Children Drowning was formed.”

JACD — Just Against Children Drowning — became Demello’s platform to educate families, raise awareness, and advocate for drowning prevention. But as the organization grew, he felt something was missing — a clear, focused message



Joshua and Christian Demello  
Paul Demello’s twin boys who drowned in a backyard swimming pool.



If you have children, grandchildren, or children in your neighborhood that can access your pool, don’t wait, take action: Prioritize pool safety by getting a reliable, climb-resistant pool safety fence!

that could drive real change.

He began meeting with other grieving parents and joined the National Drowning Prevention Alliance. It was at one of his first meetings that someone offered the advice that would reshape his efforts: “Try to focus on what would have changed your situation.”

For Demello, the answer was immediate.

“Absolutely the fence,” he said. “It is something tangible. Something that would have slowed them down. Something that would have given their mother enough time to locate them.”

He’s heard all the excuses — that fences are unattractive or inconvenient — and he’s quick to shut them down.

“There are people who call it an

ugly pool fence — I’m like, it’s only temporary. It’s not forever. It’s either that or a coffin,” Demello said. “We actually had an open coffin. We had two kids lying in an open coffin.”

That reality drives everything he does.

“I think some people just don’t think it’s going to happen to them,” he said. “It’s too late once it happens. And the fence is not forever. You can remove it; you can put it back. It’s a tool. It’s a device. These fences are saving lives.” Demello became laser-focused on helping families access that tool. He partnered with Florida’s Department of Children and Families to provide free pool safety fences to families in the child welfare system.

“The fence was something tangible,” he said. “I believe my kids would be alive today if there was a fence.”

And it’s not just about fences. To Demello, drowning prevention belongs in the same category as other public safety measures.

“From the bike helmet to car seat-belts, you know — it works,” he said. Still, the pain never leaves.

“I miss my boys,” he said. “One of the toughest things I’ve had to do was survive this — survive my emotions.”

But Demello remains committed to the effort, day after day.

“I’m a dad on a mission. If only you could have seen how I was when they were here: It was like hitting the lottery. I really enjoyed being a dad. What I’m really trying to do is keep their spirit alive here on earth through selfless labor. It’s almost like a form of therapy for me. It’s an opportunity and it’s a privilege. Probably one of the greatest opportunities I have is to share that story about my boys. The power to save lives.”

“Always thinking about the solution and trying to turn that tragedy into a gift for others so they don’t have to go through the same thing,” he said.

But over the years, Demello has watched the drownings continue. And that’s what drives him — the knowledge that a story like his can be stopped before it starts. Through his pain, through his purpose, Paul Demello is doing everything he can to make sure no other parent has to endure what he did.

“It’s almost predictable,” he said. “It’s definitely preventable.”

# Expert advice on drowning prevention

As part of its year-round education and advocacy efforts, the National Drowning Prevention Alliance (NDPA) works with the water safety community, including the pool industry, to provide the free ready-to-use materials with pre-produced materials and resources; honors those actively working to protect children from drowning through its #WaterSafetyChampion campaign; and hosts the annual Water Safety Conference, which brings industry professionals and parent advocacy groups together to listen, learn, and work as an alliance to prevent drowning.

This summer, NDPA is reaching parents and caregivers with a new shareable public service video that reinforces the importance of the Five Layers of Protection and water competency as a #firstsport. Told from the perspective of five babies, the 60-second video was launched this month on social media @drownalliance and is an easy way for pool service professionals to help

spread the word. With both pool owners and professionals working together to spread the message about the importance of water safety and water safety measures, and with organizations such as the NDPA sharing resources, we can all work together to help ensure a safe and enjoyable water experience for everyone.

According to NDPA, which works to prevent childhood drowning through awareness and advocacy, the first step is dispelling five common drowning myths:

1. If a child is in distress in the water, they will be heard and there will be time to save them.
2. Watching a child during swim-time ensures their safety.
3. Having an adult present will keep a child safe.
4. Knowing how to swim means a child is water competent.
5. "It can't happen to me."

### What We Know

So long as there is a water source accessible to a child, whether it is a pool, lake, beach, or bathtub, the risk

of drowning is ever present. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) ranks drowning as the leading cause of death among children aged 1-4. Unlike in the movies, it can occur quickly and silently. In fact, close to 70% of drowning incidents involving young children occur during non-swimming times when a little one finds their way to a pool or open water undetected.

We also know that drowning is frequently accidental and preventable. However, no one watersafety practice is fail-safe, and the NDPA advocates strongly for the implementation of multiple layers of protection to prevent tragedies and save lives.

In addition to its own public education efforts, NDPA relies on its partners, including those in the pool service industry to help share and spread the word on the importance of the **Five Layers of Protection**: The installation of proper fencing and barriers limit a child's access to pools and other water bodies.

### 2. Constant, Close and Capable Adult Supervision:

A water watcher should be designated any time children are around a pool or open water.

**3. Water Competency:** More than half (54%) of children aged 4-17 in the United States are unable to perform basic water safety skills. Participation by children aged 1-4 in formal swimming lessons that include water competency survival skills significantly reduces the risk of drowning. Water competency skills include learning how to "flip and float" for infants and toddlers and how to swim parallel to shore to escape a rip current for older kids and teens.

**4. Life Jackets:** Ensure children wear appropriate life jackets when participating in open-water activities.  
**5. Emergency Preparedness:** Learn CPR with rescue breaths and always have ready access to a phone to call 911.

To learn more, visit [www.ndpa.org](http://www.ndpa.org). To download the Water Safety Season Toolkit, visit [ndpa.org/toolkit](http://ndpa.org/toolkit), to share NDPA's #FirstSport video visit [@drownalliance](https://www.instagram.com/drownalliance) on Instagram.





As your business shifts into the warmer months, please check out our free water safety resources so you will be ready to share them with your clients as they open and enjoy their pools this summer. Together, we can prevent drownings.

www.ndpa.org



## NDPA

NATIONAL DROWNING PREVENTION ALLIANCE

# Get an electrical inspection

Most people are aware that water and electricity don't mix, but a surprising number of electricity-related accidents happen in swimming pools. To our knowledge, the most recent fatal incident occurred in September 2020. 15-year-old Khaleel Marcos Reynolds was electrocuted after he touched wires from an interior pool light at the North Villa Inn swimming pool in Houston, Texas. According to authorities, the pool's interior light had been removed, exposing the wires. Officials said that based on the pool's inspection history, it shouldn't have been open in the first place.

Experts say that for safety reasons it's a good idea to get your residential pool inspected twice a year for electrical continuity, and get any pool lights checked at that time.

Lights are required by National Electric Code to be grounded and

bonded, and that is one of the primary things that should be inspected at least twice a year — that the grounding is intact, the bonding is intact, and the Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) is present and functional.

If the GFCI is working properly, it should shut the power off to the pool if there is a problem. Electrical inspections by qualified and licensed professionals can save lives. This is particularly important on older pools where some of the wiring may have come loose or become corroded.

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the biggest concerns are faulty underwater lighting; aging electrical wiring that hasn't been inspected; or the use of electrical appliances that are not grounded. Ask your pool and spa service professional to arrange an electrical inspection today.



## If I knew then what I know now

When we first started gathering material for this special homeowner's edition, we realized that a most valuable message on drowning prevention, and perhaps the most wise, would come from people who have lost a loved one in a backyard swimming pool.

Unfortunately it was all too easy to find a large group of people that grows in size daily.

The group is called Families United —

A collection of smaller organizations that have come together for the worst possible reason: the loss or near loss of someone they love to a water tragedy.

Families United is made up of a core of 75 people, representing 24 different organizations that promote specific aspects of water safety.

### Drowning Prevention Check List

*If a child is missing...*

**CHECK THE POOL FIRST!**

*If there are anyone people around...*

**NO ONE IS WATCHING THE POOL!**

*If your neighbor has a pool...*

**YOUR CHILD CAN GET IN IT!**

If you are waiting for splashing, there is no noise when a person is drowning.

Toddler's can climb into above ground pools.

Children can crawl through doggie doors and get into swimming pools.

Pool covers come off and only you can assure that it is on. Swim lessons help prevent drowning but don't come with a guarantee.



# THE Vac-Alert™ SVRS

There are lots of great reasons to install our SVRS - including the best reason of all: *tosaveaperson'slife.*

The Vac-Alert™ SVRS prevents body and limb entrapment on all pool and spa main drains.



## Easy Installation

## All Mechanical

The Vac-Alert™ SVRS is an all mechanical, non-electrical device.

## Economical

Best seller -nationally and internationally.

## Reliable

We've worked hard to make our product operate reliably, eliminating the need for call-backs.

## Features

- 0 Milliseconds response
- 0 Self-monitoring
- 0 Non-electrical
- 0 Low cost
- 0 Chemically resistant
- 0 Easy to install
- 0 Maintenance free
- 0 3 year warranty

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The Vac-Alert™ SVRS meets the SVRS requirements of the 2015 ISPSA International Swimming Pool and Spa Code, the 2007 VGB Pool and Spa Safety Act, the 2006 IRC/IBC building codes, and meets or exceeds all ANSI/ASME and ASTM performance standards for safety vacuum release systems.