



COUNTY OF AMHERST



Public Information Officer

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Public Service Announcement

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Pool Safety Tips

With warmer weather arriving we know many citizens are thinking about their options for Summer fun. As a County we are tasked by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development to enforce the international swimming pool and spa code for the safety of our residents. Amherst County adds no local amendments to this code.

Preventable accidents from these vessels account for a significant amount of injuries, not to mention zoning and health department violations. If you are considering adding a pool to your yard this summer, here is some information that may help you in the process.

- **Many back yard swimming pools need a permit.** If your pool has more than 150 square feet of surface water, 5000-gallon capacity, or more than twenty-four inches of water depth you need a permit.
- **Even if you do not need a permit for the pool, you will probably need a fence.** The International Building Code states that any pool with more than twenty-four inches of water has to have a four-foot fence or other barrier around it. In-ground and above-ground pools and spas should be surrounded on all sides by a barrier at least four feet in height and should not be climbable.
- **You may need an alarm.** If your house is part of the barrier around the pool, you will need to add an alarm on any door entering the pool area. You may also want to install a pool alarm to detect accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water.
- **Don't forget the accessories.** Pool covers, drain covers, and lifesaving equipment are all essential for keeping your family safe.
- **Keep your water clean and clear.** According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than one in ten routine pool inspections identified pool disinfectant level violations. If you cannot see the bottom of the pool at its deepest point, the pool should not be used.
- **If you have questions, contact us.** Stop by the Community Development office Monday-Friday 8:30 to 5:00, visit the webpage at: <https://www.countyofamherst.com/departments/index.php?structureid=14>, or call 434-946-9302. We are always here to help!

Additional information may be obtained from Joy Niehaus at jlniehaus@countyofamherst.com or (434) 946-9400.