

# Safety Fact Sheet

## Inflatable or Portable Swimming Pools



### What is an inflatable or portable swimming pool?

Inflatable or portable pools are pools which can be inflated or assembled as required. Pools less than 300mm in height are classified as small pools, while those 300mm or greater in height are classed as large pools.

### How may children be injured when using an inflatable or portable swimming pool?

#### Drowning:

- Toddlers can drown in as little as 5 cm of water. Pools left unattended are a potential drowning hazard.
- Children may drown in small amounts of water collected in inflatable or portable pools as a result of rain or nearby sprinklers.

#### Electrocution

- Portable electrical pumps and filter systems can cause electrocution if not used properly.

#### Infection

- Children can become ill when pool water is left uncleaned for long periods of time.

### How common are these injuries?

Drowning is a leading cause of death among children aged less than 14 years living in New South Wales. Between 1998 and 2002, drowning was the leading cause of death for children aged 1-4 years.<sup>1</sup> The majority of drowning deaths in children under one year of age occurred in bathrooms, while the majority of drowning deaths in children aged one to four years occurred in pools.

### Is there a Law or an Australian Standard for inflatable or portable swimming pools?

The law in NSW states that all pools able to be filled with water to 300mm or more in depth, must be surrounded by a safety barrier separating the swimming pool from any residential building and any place adjoining the premises. Fences around pools must be designed, constructed, installed and maintained in accordance with the standards prescribed by the regulation (Australian Standard 1926-1986).

The law also states that owners/occupiers of a property with a swimming pool that is able to be filled to 300mm or more in depth should:

- Maintain child-resistance barriers so they are effective.
- Ensure all doors and gates providing access to the swimming pool are kept securely closed at all times.
- Ensure that at all times a warning sign is displayed in the area near the pool. This sign should be clearly visible and contain approved resuscitation techniques. This sign must state the following: 'YOUNG CHILDREN SHOULD BE SUPERVISED WHEN USING THE SWIMMING POOL.'

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### Remember:

- Always read the labels on inflatable and portable swimming pools. Warning information can vary depending on the height of the pool.
- If using an electric pump, fit a Safety Switch to the house where the pool will be used. Check that the pump and filter have an electrical safety approval number or Regulatory Compliance Mark.
- Ask an electrician to install a suitable electrical power point near the pool so you don't have to use extension cords.
- For pools above 300mm in height, consult your council on fencing requirements, maintain child-resistant barriers and display a warning sign with approved resuscitation techniques.
- Always supervise children in inflatable and portable swimming pools.
- Ensure the water is kept pure.
- Empty the pool and store it away from children when not in use.

<sup>1</sup>. Schmertmann M, Finch C, Williamson AM. (2004) NSW Injury Profile: A review of injury data from 1998 - 2002. NSW Injury Risk Management Research Centre, UNSW, Sydney.