

Regulations per 780 CMR Massachusetts State Building Code 9th Edition

Effective 01/01/2018 International pool and Spa Code 2015

Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot tubs Barrier Requirements

An outdoor private swimming pool (in-ground, above-ground, on-ground, hot tub or spa) containing more than 24 inches of water shall be provided with a protective barrier, which shall comply with the following:

Barrier Requirements:

The Fence:

1. Top of barrier shall be at least 48 inches above finished ground level (side opposite pool) Height shall exist around the entire perimeter of the barrier and for a distance of 3'0" measured horizontally from outside of the required barrier
2. A 2 inch space between barrier and ground (side opposite the pool) if grass or dirt
3. A 4 inch space between top of pool and barrier (maximum) if concrete
4. Openings in barrier shall not allow passage of a 4 inch diameter sphere
5. Solid Barriers which do not have openings, such as a masonry or stone wall, shall not contain indentation or protrusions except for normal construction tolerance and tooled masonry joints that a toe or hand hold could assist in the climbing of the barrier
6. 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 ¾ inches in width. Where there are decorative cutouts within vertical members, spacing within the cutouts shall not exceed 1 ¾ in width.
7. Mesh fence as a barrier. Other than chain link fences in accordance with section 305.2.7 shall be installed in accordance with the manufactures instructions and shall comply with the following: 1) the bottom of the mesh fence shall not be more than 1 inch above the deck or installed surface or grade. 2) The maximum vertical clearance from the bottom of the mesh fence and the solid surface shall not permit the fence to be lifted more than 4 inches from grade or decking. 3) The fence shall be designed and constructed so that it does not allow passage of a 4 inch sphere under any mesh panel. The maximum vertical clearance from the bottom of the mesh fence and solid surface shall not be more than 4 inches from grade or decking 4), an attachment device shall attach each barrier section at a height not lower than 45 inches above grade. Common attachment devices include, but are not limited to, devices that provide the security equal to or greater than that of a hook and eye type latch incorporating a spring actuated retaining lever such as a safety gate hook. 5) Where a hinged gate is used with a mesh fence, the gate shall comply with section 305.3 6) Patio deck sleeves such as vertical post receptacles that are placed inside the patio surface shall be of a nonconductive material. 7) Mesh fences shall not be installed on top of on ground residential pools.
8. Closely spaced horizontal members. 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 pool or spa side of the fence. Spacing between vertical members shall not exceed 1 ¾ inches in width. Where there are decorative cutouts within vertical members, spacing within the cutouts shall not exceed 1 ¾ inches in width.
9. Widely spaced horizontal members. 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, the interior width of the cutouts shall not exceeds 1 ¾ inches.
10. Chain link dimensions. The maximum opening formed by chain link fence shall not be more than 1 ¾ inches. Where the fence is provided with slats fastened at the top and bottom, which reduces the openings, such openings, shall be not more than 1 ¾ inches.
11. Diagonal members. Where the barrier is composed of diagonal members, the maximum opening formed for the diagonal members shall be no more than 1 ¾ inches. The angle of the diagonal members shall be not greater than 45 degrees from vertical.
12. Clear zone. There shall be clear zone of not less than 36 inches between the exterior of the barrier and any permanent structures or equipment such as pumps, filters, and heaters that can be used to climb the barrier.
13. Pool barrier setbacks. The pool or spa side of the required barrier shall not be less than 20 inches from the water's edge.

The Gate:

1. Access gates shall be equipped to accommodate a locking device. Pedestrian access gates shall open outward away from the pool or spa and shall be self-closing and shall have a self-latching device.
2. Utility or service gates. Gates not intended for pedestrian use, such as utility or service gates, shall remain locked when not in use.
3. Double or multiple gates shall have at least one leaf secured in place and the adjacent leaf shall be secured with a self-latching device. The gate and barrier shall not have openings larger than ½-inch within 18 inches of the latch release mechanism. The self-latching device shall comply with 305.3.3
4. Latches. Where the release mechanism to the self-latching device is located less than 54 inches from grade, the release mechanism shall be located on the pool or spa side of the gate not less than 3 inches below the top of the gate, and the gate and barrier shall not have openings greater than ½ inch within 18 inches of the release mechanism

