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# Town of Jupiter

## Building Department

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BUILDING INSPECTION SERVICES  
APRIL 2017

### REQUIREMENTS FOR BARRIERS AROUND SWIMMING POOLS AND SPAS

#### R4501.2 Definitions:

**Barrier:** A fence, dwelling wall or non-dwelling wall or any combination thereof which completely surrounds the swimming pool and obstructs access to the swimming pool, especially access from the residence or from the yard outside the barrier.

Young Child: Means any person under the age of six years.

NOTE: "Good Side" refers to the side with Vertical members and 'Climbable Side' refers to the side with Horizontal members.

The purpose of the pool barrier fence is to create a permanent non-removable, non-climbable barrier, 48 inches high around the swimming pool or spa to prevent a young child from coming in contact with the water.

The requirements for child safety barriers around swimming pools and spas stems from the interaction of The Florida Building Code Residential — Chapter R4501 and Florida Statutes 553 and 515.

#### R4501.17 Residential swimming barrier requirement.

Residential swimming pools shall comply with Sections R4501.17.1.1 through R4501.17.1.3.

**Gates** are to swing out away from the pool/spa only. Double swing gates are not permitted. The gate must swing close and latch automatically. The latch is to be located not less than 54 inches high as measured from the bottom of the gate or the latch must be effectively protected to prevent being reached from outside the enclosure.

**Fences** are to be a minimum of 48 inches high. The maximum distance from the ground to the bottom of the fence is 2 inches, or from a pool deck or structure to the bottom of the fence is 4 inches. Vertical (up and down) members are to have no more than a 4 inch space between them. Horizontal (side to side) members are to be no less than 45 inches apart when measured from the top of the lower member to the top of the upper member. When less than 45 inches apart the vertical members must have a space of no more than 1 3/4 inches between them.

**Wood Stockade Fence:** the "good side" faces away from the pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The vertical boards butt edge to edge and there is no space between the boards.

**Wood Shadow Box Fence:** The maximum space between the vertical boards on the outside (side away from the pool) is 1 3/4 inches. There is no maximum space requirement on the inside boards.

**Wood Picket Fence:** The "good side" faces away from the pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The maximum space between the vertical boards is 1 3/4 inches.

**Wood Board-on-Board Fence:** The "good side" faces away from the pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The boards overlap and there is no space between the boards.

**Chain Link Fence:** Standard vinyl coated chain link fence 48 inches high is approved when installed with a top rail and the posts are set no more than 8 feet apart. The gate must have a plunger latch the top of which is no less than 54 inches high when measured from the bottom of the gate. The gate must only swing out, away from the pool/spa and self-close and latch automatically.

**R4501.17.1.6** Maximum mesh size for chain link fences shall be a 2 ¼ inch square (57 mm) unless the fence is provided with slats fastened at the top or bottom which reduce the openings to no more than 1 ¾ inches (44 mm).

**PVC Plastic Shadow Box Fence:** Most are **NOT APPROVED**, because the center horizontal cross member extends thru both sides of the fence and is less than 45 inches above the bottom horizontal cross member. The fence is climbable regardless of the spacing of the vertical pieces.

**PVC Plastic Privacy Fence:** The vertical pieces interlock and there are no spaces between the vertical pieces. **NOT APPROVED** at 48 inches. Due to the height of the bottom horizontal cross member, the distance from the top of the bottom cross member to the top of the fence is less than 45 inches. Generally approved at 60 inches.

**PVC Plastic Picket Fence:** **Generally NOT APPROVED** because with most designs the vertical pickets pass thru the horizontal cross member. If the vertical pickets are attached to the face of the horizontal cross member then the "good side" faces away from pool/spa. The climbable side faces inside towards the pool/spa. The maximum space between the vertical pickets is 1 3/4 inches

**R4501.17.1.3 SOLID BARRIERS** which do not have openings shall not contain indentations or protrusions except for normal construction tolerances and tooled masonry joints.

**ALL 48 INCH HIGH ORNAMENTAL FENCES, REGARDLESS OF MATERIAL, ARE NOT APPROVED.** The reason being that the circles, scrolls, cutouts, cross bars, etc that create the design cause the fence to be climbable. There can be nothing less than 45 inches above the ground or bottom horizontal cross member with a horizontal dimension greater than 1 3/4 inches.

**Decorative Cut-outs** in solid vertical members shall not exceed 1 1/2 inches in width or less than 45 inches apart.