Resources for you

To contact the Consumer Products Safety Commission

Call (301) 504-7908; online: www.cpsc.gov

Health District Contacts

For more information about the federal Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, contact the Environmental Health Director of your local public health district.

Health District 1—Panhandle Health District (Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai, and Shoshone counties) call: (208) 415-5200

Health District II—North Central District Health (Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, and Nez Perce counties) call: (208) 799-3100

Health District III—Southwest District Health (Adams, Canyon, Gem, Owyhee, Payette, and Washington counties) call: (208) 455-5400

Health District IV—Central District Health (Ada, Boise, Elmore, and Valley counties) call: (208) 327-7499

Health District V—South Central Public Health District (Blaine, Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls counties) call: (208) 737-5917

Health District VI—Southeast District Health (Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Butte, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, and Power counties) call: (208) 239-5272

Health District VII—Eastern Idaho Public Health District (Bonneville, Clark, Custer, Fremont, Jefferson, Lemhi, Madison, and Teton counties) call: (208) 533-3127

This information is provided through the cooperation of

Idaho's Public Health Districts
and the Injury Prevention and Surveillance Program
Idaho Division of Health

Idaho Department of Health and Welfare
450 West State Street, 6th Floor
P.O. Box 83720, Boise, ID 83720-0036
Fax: (208) 334-6573

Pool and Spa Safety in Idaho

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act

Important Information for All Idaho Swimming Pool and Spa Owners and Operators

IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

What is the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (the Baker Act)?

The Baker Act became federal law and was signed by the President on December 19, 2007. The Act is named after Virginia Graeme Baker, the daughter of Nancy Baker and the granddaughter of former Secretary of State James Baker. Virginia died in a tragic incident in June 2002 after the suction from a spa drain trapped her under the water.

In the U.S.:

283 drowning deaths happened to children younger than 5 in pools and spas. (2003-2005 data)

2,700 emergency room-treated submersion injuries happened to children younger than 5 in pools and spas. (2005-2007 data)

74 incidents were reported having to do with suction entrapment, including 9 deaths and 63 injuries. (1997-2007 data)

What is the reason for this new law?

The new law is intended to reduce deaths and injuries from incidents caused by suction from pool and spa drains. The intent is to make pools and the places around them safer and to educate consumers and industry on pool safety.

Suction entrapment: When a swimmer becomes stuck to a drain or suction outlet in a swimming pool, spa, wading pool, or hot tub, the force of the filtration system can be tremendous. This "suction entrapment" will hold the bather until the vacuum is broken.

What am I required to do by this law?

On or after December 19, 2008 ...

- Swimming pool and spa drain covers must meet specific performance requirements found in the standard titled ***ASME/ANSI A112.19.9.2007***.
- Owners of swimming pools, wading pools, spas and hot tubs must meet specific requirements for correctly installing drain covers.
- In certain instances, pools and spas must have additional devices or systems designed to prevent suction entrapment.

ASME/ANSI A112.19.9.2007 "The Suction Fittings for Use in Swimming Pools, Wading Pools, Spas, and Hot Tubs," is the standard that spells out the requirements for drain covers.

Drain covers that meet this new standard are coming onto the market now.

Is my pool or spa affected by this law?

Yes. It is important to understand that public swimming pools are defined differently under the federal Baker Act than they are under Idaho state law. Although Idaho state law doesn't regulate all swimming pools (for example, those owned and operated by hotels, motels, and apartment complexes), this exclusion does not apply to this new federal law. Please note that after December 2008, the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) will have the authority to enforce the Baker Act requirements for all public swimming pools and spas in Idaho.

This Act does not affect homeowners and private pool operators.

Exception for Pools and Spas with Multiple Main Drains

The CPSC states that pools and spas ***with multiple main drains*** are not subject to the requirement for additional layers of protection. These systems include: (1) safety vacuum release systems, (2) suction limiting vent systems, (3) gravity drainage systems, (4) automatic pump shut off systems, (5) drain disablement, or (6) any other system the CPSC determines to be as effective as these systems. ***ALL public swimming pools and spas***, however, must be equipped with anti-entrapment drain covers that are compliant with the ASME/ANSI A112.19.8 performance standard. Proper installation and operation of these drains ***should be certified by a design professional or an inspector following an approved inspection program.***

What if I don't comply with the new standards under this law?

Any person who knowingly violates the law is subject to a civil penalty (under Section 20 of the Consumer Product Safety Act).

Where can I get more information?

The Consumer Product Safety Commission staff has prepared a guide to the new law. You can find this guide at:
www.cpsc.gov/phth/vgpsa.pdf

The ASME/ASNI standard can be ordered from this website:

http://catalog.asme.org/Codes/PrintBook/A112198_2007_Suction_Fittings.cfm