

Managing property properly

STRICT NEW BY-LAWS FOR SWIMMING POOLS

February 14 2014 by Anna COX

Johannesburg – New safety by-laws for residential swimming pools, which could have serious legal implications for homeowners, including a jail term, are about to be approved by the City of Joburg.

All pools will have to be registered with the City of Joburg and a certificate of compliance will have to be obtained by home-owners. Houses with pools will not be able to be sold without this certificate.

Other implications are that if the pool is not properly fenced off, and someone is injured or drowns in a pool, the public liability insurance may be invalidated.

The new regulations state that a pool has to be surrounded by a wall or fence, built or erected according to National Building Regulations, which a child of 7 would not be able to climb over. The ingress and exit doors have to have self-locking mechanisms and there may be no gaps greater than 100m.

A pool net or cover, within certain specifications, or a floating pool alarm device, which is in the water at all times, may also be allowed.

The by-laws state that anyone with a swimming pool has to notify the council so that they can be registered. On inspection, a permit will be issued to the owner for the pool. Those pools that are already fenced at the time of the by-law passing will be inspected by an authorised official, to determine whether the existing fence is adequate.

Every indoor pool must be secured with the floor glided system or be fitted with floating pool alarm device.

No child under the age of 7 may be permitted to be alone in a swimming pool. They will have to be accompanied by someone aged 18 or older.

Owners will be given 21 days in which to comply. They also have a right of appeal. The penalties allow for fines of R 50 a day for every day of non-compliance.

The also specify a jail term of up to six months and an additional day for every day the pool is not compliant.

Residents have two opportunities left to comment on by-laws before they passed: Saturday from 9am to 1pm at the Sandton Library and on February 22nd at the Reception Room, Civic Centre, in Braamfontein between 9am and 1pm.

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