

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act

Consumer Protection
Fact Sheet

Frequently Asked Questions

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

There are 2 main components to the act that impact public bathing places in Oklahoma:

1. The act requires that *all public pools and spas* be equipped with drain covers conforming to the ASME/ANSI A112.19.8 – 2007 performance standard
2. The act additionally requires that *all Public Pools and spas* with a single main drain other than an 'unblockable main drain' must be equipped with one or more of the following; a *safety vacuum release system, a suction limiting vent system, gravity drainage system, automatic pump shutoff, drain disablement, or other systems determined by the commission to be equally as effective.*

When is the act effective?

The act was signed into law on December 19, 2007 and went into effect on December 19, 2008.

Does the act define a public pool or spa?

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act defines a public pool or spa as a pool that is open to the public generally, whether for a fee or free of charge, a pool that is open exclusively to members of an organization and their guests, a pool open exclusively to residents of a multi unit apartment building, apartment complex, residential real estate development or other multi family residential area, a pool open exclusively to patrons of a hotel or other public accommodations, a pool operated by the Federal Government or by a concessionaire on behalf of the Federal Government for the benefit of members of the armed forces and their dependents or employees of any department or agency and their dependents.

What is ASME/ANSI A 112.19.8-2007?

ASME/ANSI A 112.19.8-2007 is the most current standard adopted by the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and American National Standards Institute that establish materials, testing, and marking requirements for suction outlet fittings in swimming pools, spas, wading pools, and other aquatic facilities.

What is a suction outlet fitting?

A suction outlet fitting includes all components of the sump, body, cover, grate, and outlet hardware.

How does the act define a main drain?

The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) defines 'main drain' as a term referring to a plumbing fitting installed on the suction side of the pump in pools and spas, (also referred to as a suction outlet). Sometimes referred to as the drain, although it does not literally drain the pool or spa. Typically located in the deepest portion of the pool or spa it allows pool water to be drawn for circulation and filtration.

Are skimmer equalizer pipes considered a suction outlet?

Yes. The CPSC staff considers them suction outlets and they must have an approved cover installed on them.



What is an unblockable drain

CPSC defines this as a drain of any size and shape that a human body cannot sufficiently block to create a suction entrapment hazard. ASME/ANSI A 112.19.8-2007 defines this as a drain cover with a minimum size of 18" x 23", which represents the 99th percentile male torso size. CPSC documents add that a large outlet grate with a diagonal measurement of 29" or more is also considered unblockable.

What is an SVRS?

A suction limiting vacuum release system, or SVRS is a system designed to protect against entrapment, evisceration and or entanglement by ceasing operation of the pump, reversing the circulation flow, or otherwise provides a vacuum release at a suction outlet when a blockage is detected. SVRS must additionally meet the following requirements:

Testing by an independent 3rd party and found to conform to ASME/ANSI A 112.19.8-2007.

Suction Limiting Vent System

A method of pool suction line plumbing that has an atmospheric vent in the line between the pump and main drain. A blockage in the main drain line would cause air to be drawn into the system and cause the pump to lose prime, thereby breaking the suction.

Gravity Drainage

A method of pool plumbing that uses gravity drainage to a collector or 'surge' tank and has water pumped from this water storage vessel back into the pool through the filtration and circulation system. This method uses no direct pump suction on the main drains.

Automatic Pump Shutoff System

A device that senses a drain blockage and shuts off the pump system to prevent suction entrapment.

Drain Disablement

Disabling the main drain will not be permitted in Oklahoma.

OAC 310:315 7-14 (h) Outlets, states in part that all public pools and spas must be provided with at least one outlet at the deepest point.

Are public pools in Oklahoma built before December 19, 2008 required to comply with this Federal Law?

Yes. Section 1404(c)(1)(i) of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act states in part that "each public pool and spa in the United States shall be equipped with anti-entrapment devices or systems that comply with ASME/ANSI A 112.19.8-2007 performance standard and or any successor standard."

There is no 'grandfather clause' for public pool constructed prior to the effective date of the act.

Will work performed on my pool to come into compliance require a permit from the Oklahoma State Department of Health?

You should notify the department of any planned work to your facility that impacts the filtration or circulation system. Some methods to bring your facility into compliance may not require a permit. Your installer will be able to advise you on the specific requirements for your facility.

