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CAMPAIGN

Call for tougher pool laws

Experts demand the State Government introduce mandatory fence checks to help save young lives



Kate Ashley-Griffiths

POOL and swimming safety experts have accused the State Government of ignoring calls for mandatory inspections of backyard pool fences.

Leader Community News launched a campaign last summer urging the Government to overhaul dangerously outdated pool fencing

laws and require pool owners to have mandatory inspections of barriers to ensure they were safe and also set up a pool register.

Following the campaign, the Government agreed to review the rules, but is now proposing to get even tougher and require all pool owners to fully fence their pool.

Currently, older pools do not have to have a dedicated fence and can rely on self-closing house doors and windows as effective barriers.

Now the Victorian Swimming Pool and Spa Safety Committee, which represents industry groups, is

urging the Government to introduce mandatory barrier inspections to compel homeowners to keep up to date with barrier maintenance.

Life Saving Victoria spokesman Paul Shannon said children were drowning in pools with safety barriers and lack of maintenance was a key issue.

Mr Shannon said the Government should commit to mandatory barrier inspections for home pools every three years and on sale or lease of a property.

Kidsafe Victoria general manager Jason Chambers said laws requiring all pools and spas to have four-sided isolation barriers did not go far enough.

The Government is now considering feedback on proposed changes.