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Page 1 of 1

Government finally acting on pool and spa safety

IF YOU have a pool or spa laws covering it are about to change as the government finally acts on repeated calls from the coroner to prevent child deaths.

There are about 158,000 pools and spas in Victoria, and a statewide pool register is being considered so authorities know exactly where they exist.

Twenty-six children drowned in backyard pools in Victoria between 2000 and 2015.

“It’s completely unacceptable these young lives have been lost and the extraordinary grief that there must be with those families,” Planning Minister Richard Wynne said yesterday. “This is completely avoidable.”

All pools built since May 2010 require a four-sided isolation fence, but those built before that were allowed direct access

from the house or any other building.

Fencing could cost up to \$3000 per pool and will have to be done by 2020.

“I don’t think the cost frankly is important when you’re talking about the deaths of young children,” Mr Wynne said.

The state coroner slammed the “seemingly perpetually inadequate” regulation

of pools in a report, released on Tuesday, on the drowning of a toddler in 2015.

It was the fourth time in five years that the coroner had called for pool safety reform.

The government says it will explore the feasibility of three-yearly mandatory inspections, and an education campaign aimed at adults increasing supervision of children near pools and spas.