



In 2010 when Jayden was two Denise found him floating in their pool. She dived in, pulled him out and did CPR. Now he is 9. In Jayden's case, the gate had been pinned open briefly, but it only took seconds for near disaster. Denise Atkinson with and her son Jayden and her older children, L-R Jamie, 18, Jacqui, 15 and Jessie, 21 Blott. Picture: Sarah Matray

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Victoria lags behind in pool and spa fence safety checks

KATHRYN POWLEY, Herald Sun April 10, 2017 11:24am Subscriber only

DEADLY swimming pool and spa fences are going unchecked while Victoria lags behind other states that have regular mandatory inspections.

Victoria's pool fence rules expire in June and draft regulations are due out in coming weeks.

The swimming pool industry and children's safety organisations are urging the Government to immediately introduce lifesaving three-yearly compliance checks on home pool fences.



Swimming Pool and Spa Association (SPASA) of Victoria's chief executive Brendan Watkins has called for immediate mandatory pool fence checks every three years and a register of pools.

"The regulation says that the owner of a swimming pool has to maintain the barrier in a safe and compliant state. The problem is they're not being maintained," he said.

"Our members go out to pools all day every day. They see gates held back by a brick, gates tied back, people who have taken a lock off gates or left a barbecue against the fence for a child to climb on."

When Denise found then two-year-old Jayden floating in their pool. She dived in, pulled him out and did CPR. Picture: Sarah Matray

[Check your pool's safety on Life Saving Victoria's Home Pool Safety App](#)

New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia all have mandatory pool fence inspections.

"Why would the Government in Victoria not do it? I have no idea," Mr Watkins said.

"We want regulation. We want people to be safe and have fantastic experiences with pools. This lack of a law, we believe, endangers people."

Kidsafe Victoria, Life Saving Victoria and Aquatics and Recreation Victoria have also been pushing mandatory checks.

Glen Waverley mum Denise Blott saved her son Jayden from drowning

That day Jayden, who was two at the time, had been riding on a little car when his mum realised he was nowhere to be seen.

"I saw the pool gate was open, I saw the car upside down in the pool, and he had fallen. I jumped in the pool, got him out, my other son called triple 0 and I started CPR."



Denise Blott with her 2 year old son, Jayden, who near drowned in their Glen Waverley pool.

The terrifying accident happened so fast, she said, and showed that no risks could be taken with pools.

Mrs Blott said she was incredibly lucky to have son Jayden alive today.

"You've got to be so vigilant," said Mrs Blott who is backing SPASA's call for new fencing rules.

Victorian Government spokesman Pat Lane said: "We know that more needs to be done to improve pool safety."

New draft building regulations would be released soon, and would include "improvements" for pool and spa barriers, he said.

Local councils were best placed to monitor and enforce building regulations, he said.

Deputy State Coroner Iain West recommended the state introduce mandatory inspections every three years and before sale or rental of a home after his inquest into the drowning of toddler Lauren Harris in 2011.



In 2010 when Jayden was two Denise found him floating in their pool. He's now nine.
Picture: Sarah Matray

POOL RULES

All residential swimming pools and spas deeper than 30cm must be fenced, but rules differ depending on when the pool or spa was installed.*

- Built before April 2010

Buildings or house may form part of the barrier, but doors must be self-closing.

— Built after April 2010

Require a four sided stand-alone barrier with no direct access from the house or any other building.

* Simplified guide only. Check with your council to make sure your fence complies.

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