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CAMPAIGN

Pool law 'revamp'

Push for fence rules to save kids' lives

**Kate Ashley-Griffiths and
Suzan Delibasic**

BACKYARD pools and spas will have to be fully fenced under groundbreaking reforms proposed by the State Government.

The changes mean houses would no longer be able to form part of a pool barrier and uniform standards would apply for all pools regardless of when they were built.

Leader launched a Make Pools Safe campaign last summer, calling for changes after the drowning death of a Croydon South toddler in his unfenced backyard pool.

Less than two months after the campaign was launched, the government admitted more needed to be done and told *Leader* in January that pool fencing rules would be reviewed. Pool and spa owners would be given a grace

period and would have to comply by 2020. It would cost up to \$3000, on average, to install compliant pool barriers and safety gates. The State Government also confirmed changes to the Building Act, which would grant inspectors new powers to enter premises and check whether barriers comply.

A statewide pool register was also being considered, as well as mandatory inspections every three years.

Last week, Planning Minister Richard Wynne said it was time for "a proper overhaul of our regulations".

"We don't want another family going through the harrowing ordeal of losing a child in these circumstances," Mr Wynne said.

The coroner last week called for urgent reforms after a backyard drowning inquest into a Melton South toddler.