

Media Release

The Hon Richard Wynne MP
Minister for Planning



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Making Things Fair.

Friday, 6 April, 2018

OVERHAUL TO KEEP KIDS SAFE AROUND POOLS AND SPAS

The Andrews Labor Government will establish a comprehensive register of all household pools and spas across the state as part of a major regulatory overhaul to keep kids safe.

Minister for Planning Richard Wynne announced the mandatory register today, and regular inspections to ensure pool and spa safety barriers are effective and working properly.

Too many children have died because of faulty, broken gates and barriers, and a lack of adult supervision.

There are an estimated 158,000 pools in Victoria and all are required to meet high safety standards in place at the time of construction.

However, many are now unsafe due to wear and tear, landscaping and house alterations, overgrown trees or ground movements.

Under the regulatory changes, pool and spa owners will be required to ensure their safety barriers remain in working order at all times – just as at the day they were installed.

Households will need to register their pool or spa with their local council, and declare their pool barriers are compliant. A regular regime of inspections as frequent as every three years will then be enforced.

Landlords will be expected to register pools and spas as owners of properties and to ensure barriers comply with required standards. They can appoint an agent to manage these responsibilities on their behalf.

The changes have been made after consultation with Life Saving Victoria, Kidsafe, the Spa and Pool Association of Victoria, the Royal Life Saving Society and Landscaping Victoria.

The Labor Government is also working on a new education campaign to highlight the dangers of leaving kids unsupervised near pools. Successive coroners have found an absence of adult supervision contributed to the drowning deaths of 25 children between 2000 and 2017.

The Government will introduce the regulatory overhaul into parliament in June, and the new register and a self-assessment tool is expected to be in place before the next summer.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Planning Richard Wynne

“We’re creating a dedicated database of every household pool and spa in Victoria, and ensuring they’re regularly inspected to make sure they comply with high safety standards.”

“Too many families have had to endure the heartbreak of losing a child in a drowning tragedy and it has to end.”

“All drowning deaths in household pools and spas share a common theme: a lack of adult supervision. Always watch kids when there’s water close by.”