

# Pool Barrier Safety Requirements

Installed from 1 May 2010

## Pool Barrier Safety Requirements

Information for pools and spas constructed from 1 May 2010

This information applies to the following buildings that had a pool or spa installed **after 1 May 2010**:

- Dwellings
- Hostels
- Hotels
- Motels
- Retirement Villages
- Boarding Houses
- Or similar

Enjoying the water is a great Australian pastime, but owning or building a pool comes with strict safety responsibilities that apply all-year-round. Australian standards require you to ensure that your fencing is properly installed, fully compliant and adequately maintained.

All swimming pools and spas on residential properties in Victoria capable of holding water to a depth of 30cm (300mm) or more are required to be surrounded by a pool barrier. This includes bathing, wading, inflatable, above ground, indoor pools, hot tubs and jacuzzis.

All gates, windows, fences or walls forming part of a pool barrier must be kept in good working order at all times.

**Applicable Australian standard AS1926.1- 2012**

### Fencing

- The pool barrier must be at least 1.2m high.
  - The gap between the bottom of the pool barrier and the ground cannot exceed 100mm.
  - A 0.9m Non Climbable Zone (clear space) must extend on the outside of a pool barrier (except with boundary fences).
  - A 0.3m Non Climbable Zone (clear space) must extend on the inside of a pool barrier (except with boundary fences).
  - Projections or indentations (potential footholds or handholds for children) within the Non Climbable Zone (clear space) must not exceed 10mm.
  - Boundary Fences (paling) can be used as safety barriers where the height of the fence is at least 1.8m high with a Non Climbable Zone (clear space) of 0.9m at the top of the fence on the pool side.
  - The strength and rigidity of fencing components and elements must comply with AS 1926.1-2012
- Appendix A.
- If a retaining wall or similar structure forms part of the pool barrier it must have a minimum height of 1.8m and a maximum lean of 15 degrees (measured from vertical), or be 1.2m high and can't be climbed.
  - Horizontal or near horizontal fencing components, such as rails, rods, wires or bracing, that could be used as holds for climbing must be greater than 0.9m apart.
  - The spaces between adjacent vertical or near vertical components of a fabricated metal fence or similar structure must not exceed 100mm.
  - An external door from a dwelling cannot open into a pool area.
  - Placing a cover or lid over a swimming pool or spa does not comply and is not acceptable. A safety barrier is required.

## Perforated materials, wire mesh or fabric fences

To be compliant, the specifications must adhere to the following:

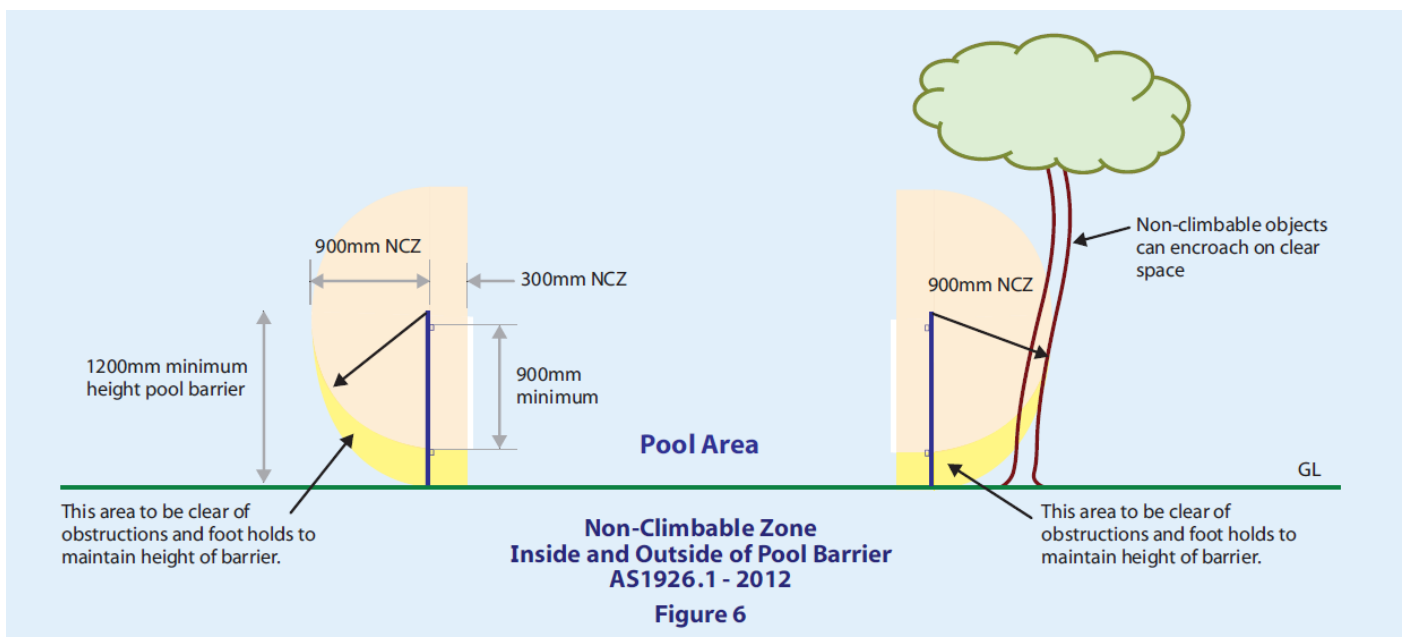
- Where the material has apertures greater than 13mm, but less than 100mm, the effective height shall not be less than 1.8m.
- Where the material has apertures 13mm or smaller, the minimum height is 1.2m.
- Material with openings greater than 100mm must not be used.
- Fencing using mesh must include a strainer wire (retains tension) at the top and bottom of the fence.
- A paling boundary fence does not comply as a perforated material.

## Gates and fittings

Gates and fittings must comply with the relevant requirements of AS 1926.1–2012:

To be considered compliant gates and fittings must:

- Swing outwards away from the pool area.
- Be fitted with a self-closing device that will return the gate to the closed position and engage the latching device automatically
  - it must achieve this from any position from resting on the latching mechanism to fully open, and
  - from a stationary start without using manual force.
- Be fitted with a self-latching device
  - that will automatically operate on the closing of the gate and prevent the gate from being re-opened without manual release, and
  - that cannot be inadvertently adjusted in operation or adjusted without the use of tools, and located and shielded in accordance with one of the options shown AS 1926.1-2012, or
  - the latching device must be a minimum 1.5m above ground level on the approach side, or be sheltered (as with glass gate).

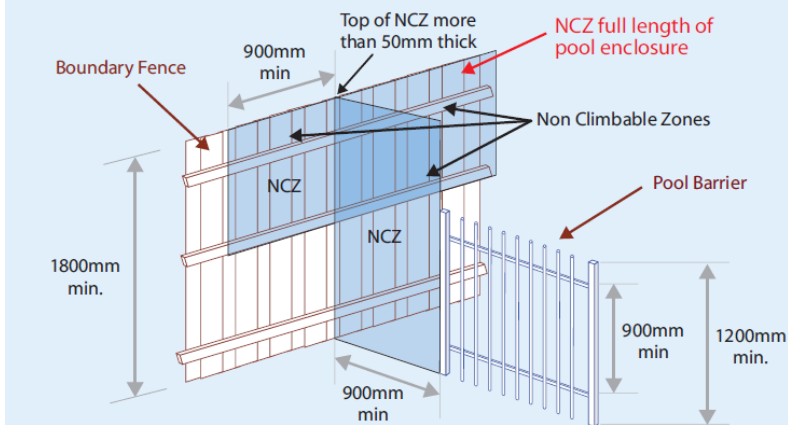






**Boundary Fence Used as a Pool Barrier  
AS1926.1 - 2012**

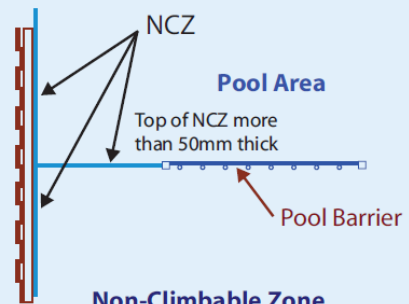
**Figure 8**



**Non-Climbable Zone  
Intersection of Boundary Fence and Pool Barrier  
AS1926.1 - 2012**

**Figure 7.1**

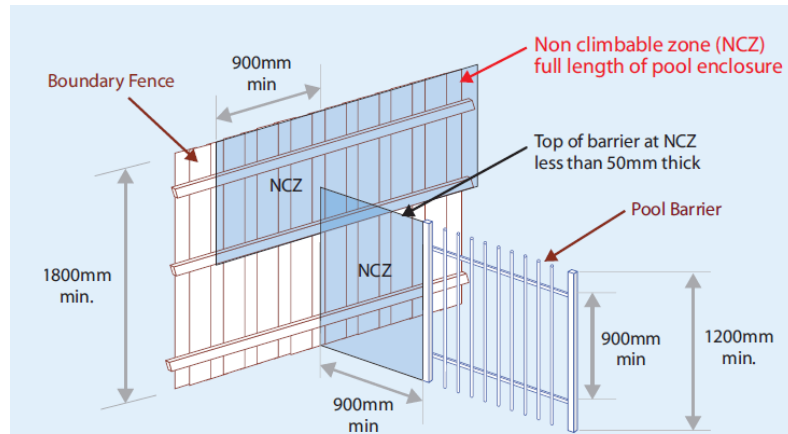
**Elevation**



**Non-Climbable Zone  
Intersection of Boundary Fence  
and Pool Barrier  
AS1926.1 - 2012**

**Figure 7.1A**

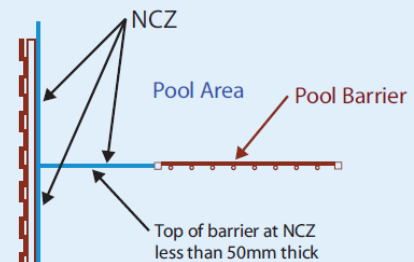
**Plan View**



**Non-Climbable Zone  
Intersection of Boundary Fence and Pool Barrier  
AS1926.1 - 2012**

**Figure 7**

**Elevation**



**Plan View Non-Climbable Zone  
Intersection of Boundary Fence  
and Pool Barrier  
AS1926.1 - 2012**

**Figure 7A**

**Plan View**

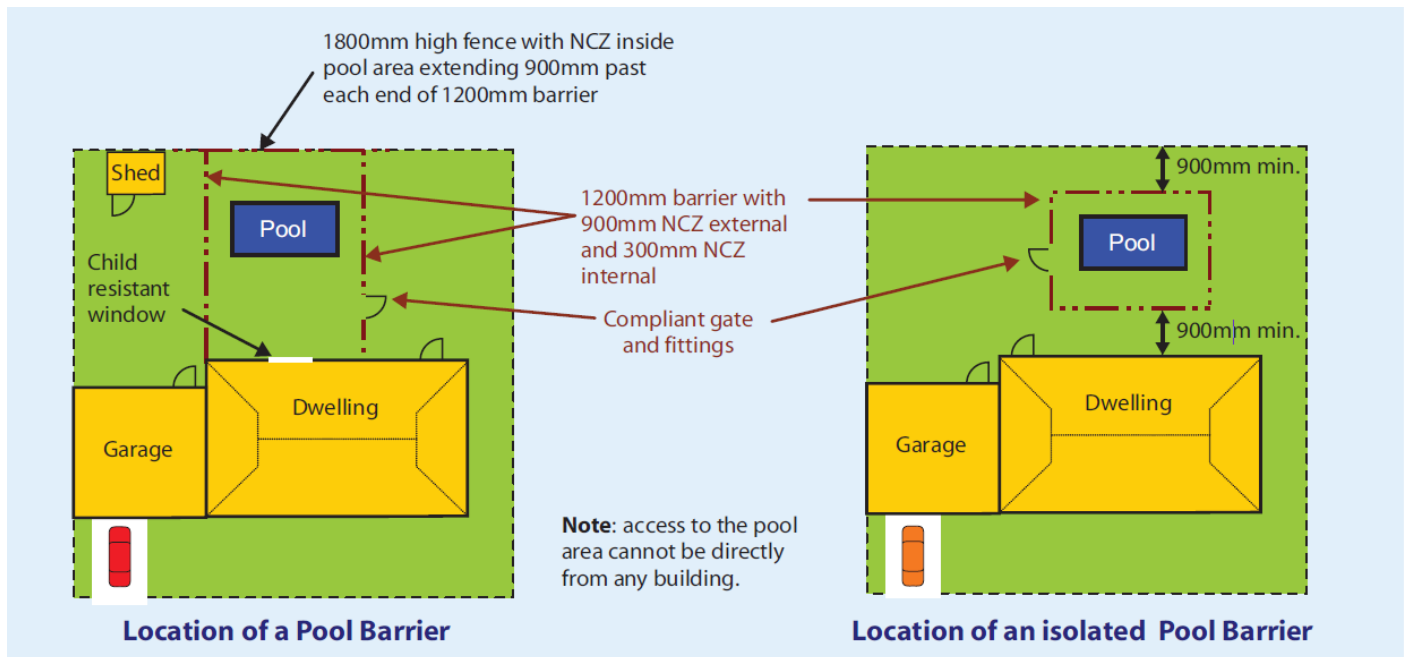
## Above ground pools

Above ground pools do require a pool barrier to protect access to the ladder, pump and filter, which a child could use to climb into the pool. The pool barrier must be 0.3m clear of any part of the ladder, pump, filter or any other climbable object.

The wall of an above ground pool can form part of a pool barrier provided the walls of the pool are a minimum of 1.2m high above ground level and are non-climbable.

## Important information if installing or upgrading your pool and/or pool fence

In accordance with the Building regulations, all work on a swimming pool and pool barrier require a Building Permit, and must be completed within six months of work start and prior to the pool being filled.



## Additional resources

For more information and resources, such as the Kid Safe Victoria pool safety checklist, please refer to [knox.vic.gov.au/pools](http://knox.vic.gov.au/pools)

### Quick facts

- If a Victorian residential pool or spa has a depth of 30cm or more (300mm), it is required to be surrounded by safety barrier. This includes inflatable pools.
- All pools and spas require a four-sided barrier (isolation fence), with no direct access from the house or any other building to the pool or spa.
- Placing a cover or lid over a swimming pool or spa does not comply and is not acceptable. A safety barrier is required.
- Safety barriers must be a minimum of 1.2 metres high.
- Barrier gates must be self-closing and selflatching.
- It is illegal to leave a pool or spa gate, or any window leading to a pool, propped open.
- Climbable objects such as pot plants, eskies, pool pumps and chairs must be moved away from the barrier.
- A building permit is required to install a swimming pool or spa and safety fence and barriers.
- A swimming pool or spa must not be filled until the pool barrier is completed and approved by the Relevant Building Surveyor.
- A Swimming Pool capable of containing a water level of less than 300mm and that is emptied after each use does not require a pool barrier.
- An external door from a building cannot open into a pool area.