Swimming Pool Guide

Residential IRC 2015 – Outdoor Pools, Spas & Hot Tubs

- This Guide represents the majority of critical items the owner/installer must meet and have inspected before covering the work. However; this is not an exhaustive list.
- All owners or pool installers must comply with the 2015 International Residential Code (IRC) - Chapter 42 AND 2015 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code
- Available free online at codes.iccsafe.org

DEFINITIONS:

- **Permanent Pools:**
  - In-Ground
  - Above-Ground with walls, deeper than 42”
- **Storable Pools:**
  - Anything above ground up to a maximum of 42” high
  - Inflatable fabric walls or non-metallic polymeric walls regardless of height.
- **Pre-Fab pools** less than 24” high are **UCC exempt**

ALL POOLS:

**E4202.2:** Flexible Cords for permanent pools only, shall be 3’ Max in length, fixed or stationary equipment can be cord connected (for underwater luminaires).

**E4203.1.1** Receptacles supplying power to circulation / sanitation equipment are allowed to be located 6’-10’ from pool walls. Shall be a single receptacle that is grounded and GFCI protected. All other receptacles required shall be no closer than 6’ from pool walls.

**E4203.1.2** Minimum of one 15 or 20 amp receptacle (other than pool pump equipment receptacle) supplied by general purpose branch circuit is required from 6’-20’ from pool edge and located no more than 6’-6” above pool grade level / deck.

**E4203.1.3** GFCI protection required for all outdoor receptacles, including pool pump motor receptacles.

**E4203.2** Switching devices shall be located no less than 5’ from pool edge, unless separated by permanent barrier such as a fence or wall.

**E4203.3** At least one disconnecting means for all utilization equipment other than lighting, shall be readily accessible and within sight (50’ max) of the served equipment. The disconnect shall be a minimum of 5’ from pool edge, unless separated from water by permanent barrier requiring a 5’ or greater reach path.

**E4203.4.1** Luminaires, Lighting outlets and suspended paddle fans shall not be installed over pool or within 5’ from pool edge, unless fixture is 12’ or more above the water level.
E4203.4.4 Existing lighting outlets/luminaires located within 5’ of pool edge, must be rigidly attached to existing structure, located no less than 5’ above maximum water level, and GFCI Protected.

E4203.4.6 Luminaires / lighting outlets installed between 5’-10’ from pool edge require GFCI protection, unless rigidly attached to the structure and no less than 5’ above maximum water level.

E4203.6 Overhead Service Drop Conductors and any other open overhead wiring shall not be installed above:

- Pools and areas extending 10’ away from pool edge.
- Diving Structures or platforms and areas within 10’:
  - Except service drop conductors are allowed above pool or within 10’ of pool edge, when at least 22.5’ away from maximum water height measured in any direction, and 14.5’ above a diving platform measured in any direction.
- Only Cable TV and Telephone lines are allowed to be a minimum of 10’ above pool or diving platforms.

E4203.7 Underground wiring installed within 5’ from pool edge must be installed in a complete raceway of RMC, IMC, or nonmetallic raceway.

- Burial Depths:
  - RMC = 6”
  - IMC = 6”
  - Nonmetallic Raceway = 18”
- Wiring unrelated to pool equipment must not be installed within 5’ unless space limitations make it necessary.

E4204.2 Bonding is required to be by minimum #8 bare, insulated, or covered solid copper conductors.

- Connections shall be made by listed pressure connectors or clamps of:
  - Stainless Steel
  - Brass
  - Copper
  - Copper Alloy
- Bonding connections shall not be by solder or sheet metal screws.
- Structural Steel shall be bonded together by steel wire ties or equivalent and inspected prior to concealment.
- Perimeter Surface must extend 3’ minimum beyond the pool walls and shall include unpaved surfaces, poured concrete or other paving types.
- Perimeter surfaces consisting of buried rebar or welded wire mesh shall be attached to pool structural steel at a minimum of 4 points, evenly spaced around pool perimeter.
- Perimeter surfaces that do not consist of buried rebar or welded wire mesh, must meet the following:
  - Minimum of one #8 bare solid copper conductor is required.
  - Follow contours of perimeter
  - Located 18”-24” from pool walls.
  - Located 4”-6” below the sub-grade.
  - Attached to pool structure at a minimum of 4 evenly spaced points.
- All metallic parts of pool structure including structural steel are to be bonded.
- All metal shells of underwater luminaires shall be bonded.
- All metal fittings within or attached to pool structure shall be bonded, including handrails, ladders, etc.
- All fixed metal parts located within 5’ of edge of the pool wall shall be bonded.
E4204.3 Pool water shall be intentionally bonded by 9 Sq in of a conductive surface in contact with pool water, such as ladders, ie. lighting, components, ie. Drain bodies, etc.

Storable Pools Only:

E4207.1 Filter pumps shall be protected by double insulation and shall be provided with a GFCI that is either an integral part of the attachment plug or located in the power supply cord within 12” of the attachment plug.

E4207.2 All 120 volt receptacles located within 20 feet of a storable pool shall be GFCI Protected.

E4207.4 Receptacles must be located no closer than 6’ from the walls of a storable pool.

2015 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code

2018 PA UCC Swimming pools regulated by 2015 IRC and ISPSC only apply to those that contain over 24” of water.

305 Barriers (Fencing)

- Minimum of 48” above grade; pool structure itself can also meet these requirements
- Maximum distance between grade and barrier bottom is 2” (Up to 4” allowed where barrier is over concrete or pavement)
- Openings shall not allow a 4” sphere to pass through
- Solid barriers shall be constructed without indentations or shall be approved to be unclimbable.
- Maximum chain link fence openings shall be 1.75”.
- Mesh fences must be installed according to manufacturer’s instructions, and bottom of mesh fences must be 1” maximum above grade and must not be able to be lifted more than 4” from the grade / decking.
- Barriers shall be located at least 36” from any permanent structures or equipment, to prevent equipment or objects from being used to climb them.

305 Access Gates:

- Gates shall be self-closing and self-latching, and open away from the pool.
- Release mechanisms shall either be located on the outside of the gate at least 54” minimum from the bottom of gate or both of the following:
  - Located on the pool side at least 3” below top of gate
  - There shall be no openings larger than ½” within 18” of the release mechanism.
  - Dwelling walls that contain doors or operable windows with a sill height below 48” with direct access to pool shall be equipped with an audible alarm that sounds when the door is opened, with a deactivation switch located 54” minimum above the door threshold. Alarms must be UL 2017 listed.
  - Access by a ladder or set of steps, must be capable of being secured, locked, or removed to prevent access or shall be surrounded by a barrier meeting requirements for barrier around pool.
  - If less than 45” between horizontal bars, then horizontal bars must be on pool side and spindle spacing must not exceed 1.75”.

AG106: Suction outlets shall comply with APSP 16