



## **The Time is NOW!**

### **The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act takes effect today!**

All organizations that operate public pools and spas must meet this standard.

Does your pool comply? The law requires:

1. All public pools/spas must be equipped with new, ASME/ANSI compliant, anti-entrapment drain covers
2. Pools/spas operating off of a single main drain (other than an unblockable drain) must add at least one of the approved methods for vacuum release

For a summary of all requirements please see this [guide from the Consumer Product Safety Commission](#).

#### **Background:**

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act was passed by Congress last year. All public pool operators, including private nonprofits, must comply with the act by Friday, December 19, 2008. The Consumer Product Safety Commission and some local inspectors have stated they will focus on the greatest risks to children—such as pools and spas with flat drain grates and single main drain systems—when deciding whether or not to close a pool for non-compliance. Seasonal pools have until their opening date to comply.

While this is federal legislation, state health and enforcement agencies share the responsibility to ensure this law is properly enforced.

#### **As of Today:**

Organizations should immediately take action to shut down their pools or ensure compliance with the new regulations.

If you have not begun to work on compliance, Safe-Wise Consulting recommends that you immediately cease operation until the following steps toward compliance have been completed:

1. An inspection of every pool filtration and drain system is conducted
2. A plan for compliance is developed
3. Your enforcement agency has been contacted to review your plan and to gain their guidance
4. A contractor has been secured to supply needed repair work and/or drain covers
5. Your pool(s) is compliant

If however, efforts have been made to comply, but drain covers are not currently available, your organization should:

1. Contact your insurer to find out their stance on this issue
2. Document discussions with their enforcement agency
3. Document communication with pool contractor for compliance work
4. Document any backordered purchase of drain covers
5. Move forward as rapidly as possible toward complete compliance

In this case pools may continue to operate if all efforts to comply have been proactively made and are documented.

It is also recommended that organizations seek multiple proposals from contractors to ensure the most effective solution for compliance.

### **Moving Forward:**

High standards are important when it comes to pool safety. This includes meeting state bathing codes, industry guidelines and providing highly-effective and certified lifeguards at all times. Safety is the utmost priority when operating pools.

More information on the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act is available from the [Consumer Product Safety Commission](#) and [Safe-Wise Consulting](#).