

Isanti County Family Child Care Provider Swimming Pool Policy

PURPOSE

It is the intent of Isanti County to ensure child safety by providing guidance to and ensuring consistency among family child care providers in Isanti County regarding the use of swimming pools.

Background

Statistics from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cite the following:

- Children ages 1 to 4 have the highest drowning rates.
- In 2014, among children 1 to 4 years old who died from an unintentional injury, one-third died from drowning.
- Among children ages 1 to 4, most drownings occur in home swimming pools.
- Drowning is responsible for more deaths among children 1-4 than any other cause except birth defects.
- Among those 1-14, fatal drowning remains the second-leading cause of unintentional injury-related death behind motor vehicle crashes

Family child care providers must adhere to MN rules which give initial guidance on the use of swimming pools. Minnesota Rule 9502.0425, Subp. 3 states swimming pools must be inaccessible to children except during periods when used and under supervision.

The American Red Cross suggests the following for ensuring a safe environment when owning a swimming pool: Secure your pool with appropriate barriers. Completely surround your pool with a 4-foot high fence or barrier with a self-closing, self-latching gate. Place a safety cover on the pool or hot tub when not in use and remove any ladders or steps used for access. Consider installing a pool alarm that goes off if anyone enters the pool.

GUIDELINE

These suggestions by the Red Cross provide the best liability advice for child care providers and the safest situation for children. Isanti County encourages child care providers to consider implementing all of these guidelines. However, Isanti County understands implementing all of these may be rather difficult as well as costly. Therefore, a swimming pool should have a four foot fence surrounding it with ladders or steps removed when not in use. The fence should have a gate that has a latch to ensure access to the pool can only occur via releasing the latch. The ladders or steps should be removed from the pool and stored in an area inaccessible to children.