



BOROUGH OF BERNARDSVILLE

Zoning Department

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Jun 29, 2022

Pool Safety and Zoning Permits

Dear Bernardsville Borough Residents and Guest:

It is now summer and the weather is nice and hot! We want to remind everyone that Pool Safety is extremely important during these times.

Please see some education from the CDC on Pool Safety with regard to drowning prevention.

Lastly, we also ask that residents, before they erect a pool, that they call the Zoning Officer to ensure if permits are required. Any pool, temporary or permanent, that is four (4) feet and higher, requires at least a Zoning Permit. Some may require both Zoning and Construction, which can be discussed at the time of requested information. Be aware of the Swimply app where you can rent out someone else's pool regarding pool safety!

Have a Fun & Safe Summer!

Drowning Prevention

- More children ages 1–4 die from drowning than any other cause of death except birth defects.
- Drowning happens in seconds and is often silent.
- Drowning can happen to anyone, any time there is access to water.



Learn basic swimming and water safety skills

Formal swimming lessons can reduce the risk of drowning.¹⁻⁵ Children who have had swimming lessons still need close and constant supervision when in or around water.



Build fences that fully enclose pools

Construct and use a four-sided fence that fully encloses the pool and separates it from the house, with [self-closing and self-latching gates pdf icon external icon](#). Also, remove all toys from the pool area that might attract children to the pool.



Supervise closely

Designate a responsible adult to supervise closely and constantly when children are in or near water (including bathtubs). You can assign a specific adult to supervise each child when they have access to water. Adults watching kids in or near water should avoid distracting activities like reading, using the phone, and consuming alcohol or drugs, because drowning happens quickly and quietly.^{1,6} After swim time is over, shut and lock doors that give access to water. Be proactive and learn about any risks when visiting another home or unfamiliar location.



Wear a life jacket

Life jackets reduce the risk of drowning while boating for people of all ages and swimming abilities. Life jackets should be used by children for all activities while in and around natural water. Life jackets can also be used by weaker swimmers of all ages in and around natural water and swimming pools. Do not rely on air-filled or foam toys, as these are not safety devices.^{1,7}



Learn CPR

Your CPR skills could save someone's life in the time it takes for paramedics to arrive. Many organizations such as [American Red Cross external icon](#) and [American Heart Association external icon](#) offer CPR training courses, both online and in-person.



Know the risks of natural waters

Lakes, rivers, and oceans have hidden hazards such as dangerous currents or waves, rocks or vegetation, and limited visibility.⁸ Check the forecast before activities in, on, or near water. Local weather conditions can change quickly and cause dangerous flash floods, strong winds, and thunderstorms with lightning strikes.



Avoid alcohol

Avoid drinking alcohol before or during swimming, boating, or other water activities. Do not drink alcohol while supervising children. Alcohol impairs judgment, balance, and coordination.⁹



Use the buddy system

Always swim with a buddy. Choose swimming sites that have lifeguards when possible. The buddy system is especially beneficial for people with seizure disorders or other medical conditions that increase their risk of drowning.¹



Take additional precautions for medical conditions

Provide one-on-one supervision around water, including swimming pools, if you or a family member has a seizure disorder. Consider taking showers rather than using a bathtub for bathing. Wear life jackets when boating. Other medical conditions such as autism or heart conditions are also associated with a higher risk of drowning.^{1,10-12}



Consider the effects of medications

Avoid swimming if you take medications that impair your balance, coordination, or judgement. These side effects increase the risk of drowning. Several medications can produce these side effects, such as those used for anxiety and other mental health conditions.¹³



Don't hyperventilate or hold your breath for a long time

Do not let swimmers hyperventilate before swimming underwater or try to hold their breath for long periods of time. This can cause them to pass out and drown. This is sometimes called "hypoxic blackout" or "shallow water blackout".¹⁴

Respectfully,

The Bernardsville Zoning Department and Recreation Department

Contact:

Zoning Officer 908-766-3000 ext 114

Recreation Director 908-766-3000 ext 112

Reference CDC - <https://www.cdc.gov/drowning/prevention/index.html>