



4444 Round Lake Road West
Arden Hills, MN 55112

www.horizonpoolsupply.com

1-800-969-0454

LOCAL 651-917-3075

FAX 651-917-3087



FEDERAL **Swimming Pool Main Drain & Suction Safety Law Guidelines**

Federal Pool Act– Summary

The Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act passed in December of 2007. The Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has been charged with administering and enforcing the law. The complete act can be found at www.HorizonPoolSupply.com in the Resources section under Downloads.

Dec. 19, 2008— All swimming pools must be equipped with one or more of the following: Dual Drains, unblockable Cover, Safety Vacuum Release System (SVRS), Suction Limiting Vent System, Gravity Drainage System, Automatic Pump Shutoff System, Drain Disablement System, or any other system determined by the Commission to be equally effective. All suction outlets must be inspected and replaced with anti-entrapment drain covers that have the most current ASME/ANSI standard and maximum flow rate stenciled on the cover and demonstrate that the cover complies with federal law.

What You Are Required To Do?– Federal

Already Compliant? If you currently have dual drains, an unblockable drain, a gravity outlet/drain system, or a secondary safety system such as an SVRS you will most likely only be required to replace your covers with VGB approved covers. Be careful though; having two drains in your pool or spa doesn't automatically mean they are connected in parallel and safe or compliant. Please contact your local inspector or trusted pool professional if you are not sure.

Drain / Suction Covers. All suction outlets must be covered with a cover that has been tested and approved to the most recent VGB standards by a nationally recognized testing agency. The covers must be stamped with the maximum flow rating, the VGB standards it complied with, and must come with a certification document. Also, the cover mounting rings must be in new condition and covers must be attached using original mounting holes per manufacturers' specifications with screws that meet the manufacturer's specifications. The covers must be physically checked daily to ensure they are securely attached. A secondary safety system is required on single suction outlet systems.

Unblockable Covers. An unblockable cover is a cover or grate that is of a size and design that cannot be blocked by an 18" x 23" template of the human body. In many cases a retrofit unblockable suction cover can be installed over an existing single suction outlet. These covers must be tested and approved to the most current VGB standards. **According to the CPSC a secondary safety system such as an SVRS must also be required with an unblockable cover where the sump is not of an unblockable size.*

Dual Drains. Dual drains are a series of two suction outlets that are plumbed in parallel. This means that the drains are connected under the pool to allow the full flow of the pool to easily divert to the second suction in the event that one of them is blocked. Each drain must be covered with a suction cover that meets the most current VGB standards and is rated for the full flow of the pool unless there are more than two suction outlets plumbed in parallel.

Safety Vacuum Release System (SVRS). An SVRS is a system designed to cease the operation of the pump, reverse the circulation flow, or otherwise provides a vacuum release at a suction outlet when a blockage is detected. SVRS's must be tested and approved to the most recent VGB standards and can be installed on a single suction system in conjunction with a compliant cover to make a pool compliant. **Hydrostatic relief valves must be disabled and removed when SVRS's are installed or in use.*

Skimmer Equalizers. Submerged skimmer equalizer lines are considered suction outlets and are required to either have an approved cover installed or be disabled. Most states require an automatic water fill on the pool for the equalizers to be disabled. Several compliant covers that are approved for installation over skimmer equalizers are available.

Vacuum Lines. Submerged vacuum suction lines are to be immediately and permanently disabled. This can be done by cutting the line in the filter room and capping it, or by plumbing it in as a circulation return inlet. **Simply turning off the valve is not satisfactory and is still very dangerous.*

Common Retrofit Compliance Options– Federal

1. For pools/spas that have single outlet main drains or suctions that are not gravity drain systems or atmospheric vents.
 - a. **Dual Main Drains:** Installing dual drains is one of the safest compliance options for swimmers. Dual drains installed in parallel with compliant covers require no other safety systems to be installed.
 - b. **SVRS + Compliant Cover:** Install a Safety Vacuum Release System in conjunction with a compliant suction cover on single suction outlets.
 - c. **Unblockable Cover*:** Install a compliant retrofit unblockable suction cover over existing single suction outlets. **According to the CPSC a secondary safety system such as an SVRS must also be required with an unblockable cover where the sump is not of an unblockable size.*
 - d. **Pool Engineer:** A licensed pool engineer can certify unblockable suction covers where the sump is also of an unblockable size and where they determine that the cover meets all of the VGB standards for suction covers.
2. For submerged skimmer equalizers.
 - a. **Disable Skimmer Equalizers:** Disable skimmer equalizers by plugging, capping or disabling in other ways.
 - b. **Compliant Cover:** Install compliant covers over all active submerged skimmer equalizer lines. Covers must be approved for installation over skimmer equalizers.

Costs \$\$\$

There are estimates anywhere from \$50 to \$15,000 to bring pools into compliance. Here are some more detailed estimates so you can budget accordingly.

Covers (VGB Approved)	\$50+ each (add about \$150 if install is required)
Dual Drain Installation (most pools)	\$4,500 - \$7,000 (most will be on the lower end)
Unblockable Drain Covers	\$245 - \$3,000 (styles and applications vary)
Safety Vacuum Release System (SVRS)	\$650 - \$4,000 (most will be on lower end)

Final Note

Please visit our web site for more complete information on the new laws and swimming pool safety. You will find the laws and many resources for understanding the new legislation and solutions for becoming compliant including our new daily log sheet. Be sure to check with your state to ensure you comply with all applicable local laws also.

Useful Links

Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC): www.cpsc.gov

Daily Pool Log Sheet: www.horizonpoolsupply.com(clickable) in Resources, then Downloads

Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act: www.horizonpoolsupply.com (clickable) in Resources, then Downloads