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STATE– MINNESOTA

Swimming Pool Main Drain & Suction Safety Laws

Minnesota Pool Law– Summary

The Abigail Taylor Pool Safety Act requires many of the same provisions as the federal pool safety act, but goes one step further by eliminating the Safety Vacuum Release System (SVRS) as a compliance option. Both the Federal and Minnesota laws are enforceable and must be complied with. The following is a guide to complying with both laws in the state of Minnesota.

What You Are Required To Do?– Minnesota

Already Compliant? If you currently have dual drains, an unblockable drain, or a gravity outlet/drain system 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 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 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.

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 is also 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 ASME/ANSI standards. **Hydrostatic relief valves must be disabled and removed when SVRS's are installed or in use. *An SVRS is not an option for compliance in MN when installed on a single suction outlet system unless the cover is unblockable.*

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– Minnesota

1. For pools/spas that have single suction outlets 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. **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 may also be required with an unblockable cover where the sump is not of an unblockable size.*
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 Minnesota & Federal 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 review the Federal guidelines to ensure you comply with all applicable laws.

Useful Links

- Minnesota Department of Health: <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/eh/pools/index.html>
- 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
- Abigail Taylor Pool Safety Act: www.horizonpoolsupply.com (clickable) in Resources, then Downloads