

Swimming Pools, Spas & Hot Tubs

A permit is required for the installation of any swimming pool, above-ground hot tub or spa at a residential property in the City of Santa Cruz.

Exceptions:

No permit is required for Swimming, bathing and wading pools, fishponds not exceeding eighteen (18) inches in depth and pre-fabricated swimming pools, spas or hot tubs not exceeding four (4) feet in depth if resting on the surface of the ground or a concrete slab on the ground.

**Note: A permit is required for electrical connections other than plug in.*

Additional Department Approvals:

Consult with Planning Department staff prior to submitting a Building plan review for additional requirements. Ph: (831)420-5416 Email: planningcounter@santacruzca.gov

Plan Submittal Requirements for In-Ground Swimming Pools and Self-contained, Above-Ground (Portable) Spas or Hot Tubs for Building and Safety:

- A completed permit application worksheet.
- Site plan to include - lot dimensions, setback distances from property lines and from other accessory building structures to the pool/spa, location of all existing utility easements, existing/proposed retaining walls, drainage, locations of pool/spa equipment, disconnects, breaker size, electrical panel, gas meter location of electrical outlets within 20-ft of the pool/spa and depth of pool/spa.
- Spas/hot tubs shall be UL listed and approved (CRC R102.4).

Include Electrical Requirements on plan set (2022 CEC):

- Spas/hot tubs shall be UL listed and approved (CRC R102.4).
- Outdoor spas/hot tubs shall be in compliance with CEC 680.42.
- Indoor spas/hot tubs shall be in compliance with the CEC 680.43.
- Indicate the breaker size, type of wiring, GFCI location, and disconnect means within sight of spas/hot tubs.
- All Electrical work must comply with current California Electrical Code.
- Exterior electrical outlets installed must be GFCI protected and in a waterproof enclosure (CEC 210.8(A) & 406.9(B)(1)).
- At least one 125 volt, 15 or 20 amp receptacle shall be located not closer than 6-ft and not farther than 20-ft from the inside wall of the pool. (CEC Art. 680.22)
- Underground wiring must be clearly labeled on plan as underground and installed in Rigid Metallic Conduit or other approved method. (CEC Art. 680.11 (A)(1))
- All 15 and 20 amp, single phase receptacles located within 20-ft shall be GFCI. (CEC Art. 680.22(A)(4))
- Overhead electrical conductors must be clearly labeled on plan.

Include Plumbing Requirements on plan set (2022 CPC):

- Gas line sized per CPC Table 1215.2.
- 12-in minimum burial for underground gas lines.
- Gas lines exposed but protected from elements may be black iron or galvanized piping.
- A gas shut-off valve within 6-ft of the heater.
- Hose bibs within 20-ft of water line must have an anti-siphon device.
- Show connection (if any) to the water supply and how backflow will be prevented. If pipes carry wastewater from spa/hot tub, they shall be installed as an indirect waste (CPC 813.1)
- If you are installing a water supply inlet, it must be protected by an approved air gap, a listed vacuum breaker installed on the discharge side, or A backflow preventer.
(CPC 603.5.5 & 603.5.20):
- Indicate drainage plan. Water cannot drain into the storm drain system or onto neighboring properties.
- Include details showing the Anti-Entrapment Requirements for New/ Existing Swimming Pools & Spas
- At least two circulation drains per pump shall be hydraulically balanced and symmetrically plumbed through one or more "T" fittings and are separated by a distance of at least 3-ft in any dimension between the drains.
- Suction outlets that are less than 12-in across shall be covered with anti-entrapment grates as specified in the ASME/ANSI Standard A112.19.8, which cannot be removed except with the use of tools. Slots or openings in the grates or similar protective devices shall be of a shape, area and arrangement that would prevent physical entrapment and would not pose any suction hazard to bathers.
- Suction outlet of the pool or spa shall be upgraded so as to be equipped with an anti-entrapment cover meeting current standards of the ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineers).

Barrier & Safety Compliance:

- Compliance with the California Swimming Pool Safety Act ARTICLE 2.5. [115920 - 115929] is required.
- The swimming pool or spa area, or the entire property or yard area on which it is located, shall be equipped with a perimeter yard barrier that shall be a minimum height of 60 inches with a maximum clearance of 2" to the ground, cannot allow passage of a sphere equal to or greater than four inches in diameter, be free of physical characteristics that would could enable a child below the age of five to climb over, have access gates through the enclosure that open away from the swimming pool that are self-closing with a self-latching device placed no lower than 60 inches above the ground, (CBC Section 3109.2 115923)
 - Exception: Provided the self-contained spa or hot tub is equipped with a listed safety cover, it shall be exempted from the barrier requirements. If no cover information is available, follow the same barrier protections as for a swimming pool.
- Indicate existing and proposed barriers (fences) enclosing the pool or hot tub area.
- Note the height, materials, and any gate self-closing/self-latching hardware.
- If doors from the home provide direct access to the yard with the pool or hot tub, specify alarms per code.

Additional Required Safety Features:

Swimming pools or spas/hot tubs shall be equipped with at least two of seven drowning prevention safety features required by [SB-442](#) , [CBC Section 3109.2](#), and [CA Swimming Pool Safety Act \[115920 - 115929\]](#)

1. An enclosure that meets the requirements of Section 115923 and isolates the swimming pool or spa from the private single-family home (see Enclosure Requirements above).
2. Removable mesh pool fencing that meets ASTM International F2286 standards in conjunction with a gate that is self-closing and self-latching that can accommodate with a key lockable device.
3. A manually operated or power-operated safety pool cover that is accompanied by a label verifying the cover meets the specifications of the ASTM International F1346-23 standard.
4. The residence shall be equipped with exit alarms on doors and windows that provide direct access to the swimming pool or spa without intervening enclosure. Whenever any door or window is opened or left ajar, the exit alarm may make either an audible, continuous alarm sound or a repeating verbal warning, such as a notification that "the door to the pool is open."
5. All doors providing direct access from the home to the swimming pool or spa shall be equipped with a self-closing, self-latching device with a release mechanism placed no lower than 54 inches above the floor.
6. An alarm in good repair and operable as designed that, when placed in a swimming pool or spa, will sound upon detection of accidental or unauthorized entrance into the water. The alarm shall meet and be independently certified to the ASTM International F2208 standard that includes surface motion, pressure, sonar, laser, and infrared type alarms. A swimming protection alarm feature designed for individual use, including an alarm attached to a child that sounds when the child exceeds a certain distance or becomes submerged in water, is not a qualifying drowning prevention safety feature.
7. Other means of protection, if the degree of protection afforded is equal to or greater than that afforded by any of the devices set forth above and has been independently verified by an approved testing laboratory as meeting standards for those devices established by the ASTM International, the ASME, or another nationally recognized standards development organization, and the feature is accompanied by a label verifying that the protection meets those standards.

Required Inspections:**Indoor or Outdoor Swimming Pools**

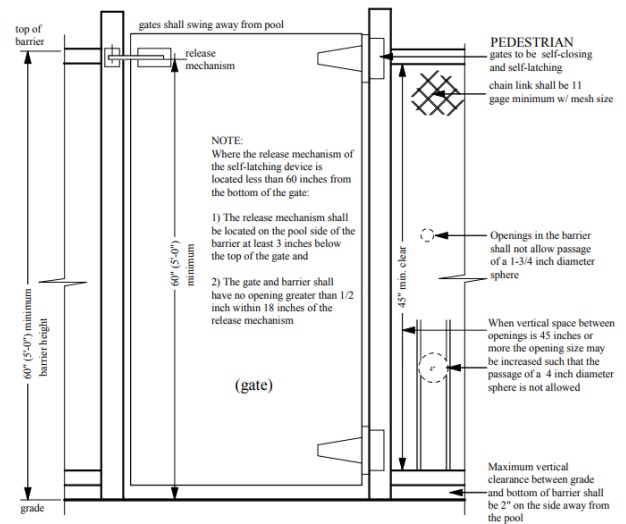
1. Steel (rebar) placement; plumbing under pressure test. A minimum pressure test of 50 PSI for 15 minutes for water line and 10 PSI for 15 minutes for gas line will be performed. Electric installed; bonding of pool and spa steel.
2. Pre-deck - Steel (grid structure), all plumbing and electric must be installed.
4. Pre-Gunite - Prior to filling the pool with water, verify barrier installation (e.g., fence, gates, door alarms).
5. Final - Final grading; location of all equipment is in operation; pool must be filled.

Spas and Hot Tubs

1. Underground Electrical & Plumbing. Required if plumbing lines or electric lines are placed underground.
2. Final. Approved safety cover or other barrier installation; all equipment operational.

Quick Submittal Checklist:

- ☐ Completed permit application
- ☐ Site/plot plan
- ☐ Hot tub specs and installation guide
- ☐ Structural support details, Stamped, signed by structural engineer (if applicable)
- ☐ Electrical plan
- ☐ Barrier/ fencing details
- ☐ Plumbing/drainage information (if applicable)
- ☐ Safety and anti-entrapment features



Enclosure examples:

