

International Swimming Pool & Spa Code (ISPSC)

- 1. What is the ISPSC?** The ISPSC is the first and only comprehensive model swimming pool and spa code available for states and localities to adopt. It is the only model code that addresses ALL (public and residential) types of pools and spas and covers ALL aspects of construction & design; including barriers, entrapment prevention, materials, finishes, dimensions and slopes, exits and entries, circulation, sanitization, signage and depth markers, and energy efficiency. It also covers ancillary components such as suction fittings, filters, pumps, motors, heaters, diving equipment, ladders and steps. It is part of the family of International Code Council model codes and was developed jointly with the PHTA.
- 2. Why is the ISPSC needed?** There is no other Code or Standard that addresses all aspects of residential and public pool and spa construction & design. While most states and local jurisdictions have some form of existing public pool code, most lack a comprehensive code or laws that address the design, construction and safety of residential pools, which is where most pool related injuries occur. Many jurisdictions lack even a barrier or suction-fitting requirement in residential pools.
- 3. Why would a state or locality want to adopt the ISPSC?** Adoption of the ISPSC will:
 - Substantially reduce child drowning or near drowning incidents by introducing or enhancing existing barrier requirements in residential pools and spas.
 - Eliminate entrapment incidents by requiring compliance with the provisions in the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act, and the ANSI/APSP-7 Entrapment Avoidance Standard.
 - Eliminate electrical incidents in and around pools and spas by requiring compliance with the National Electric Code
 - Save lives and reduce visits to the ER generally by establishing a state-of-the-art comprehensive code that reduces child drowning by requiring barriers, compliant designs and slopes and exists and entry; eliminates entrapment incidents once and for all; ensures pools & in-ground spas are built with proper materials.
 - Reduce both energy & water consumption in pools and spas.
 - Make life easier for code inspectors by adopting simple, understandable & verifiable language.
 - Bring states into compliance with the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act, as well as help them qualify for grants under the Act.
- 4. How was the ISPSC developed?** The ISPSC was developed through the rigorous International Code Council Government Consensus Process, which requires full and fair consideration of all comments and submissions, first by a balanced panel of recognized experts, and secondly, a final determination by the public servants who have hands on experience, and who comprises the ICC membership.
- 5. Are the ANSI approved APSP standards included in the ISPSC?** Yes, the ISPSC is derived from and fully supported by the ANSI/APSP national consensus standards, which have been developed under

the rigorous due process requirements of the American National Standards Institute. This process ensures full and fair considerations of all comments and submissions, and final determination by a balanced panel of recognized experts, including representatives of public health departments, independent testing facilities, the National Safety Council and the US Consumer Product Safety Commission.

6. **Does the ISPSC cover public pools, spas, & aquatic recreation facilities?** Yes, the ISPSC covers all aspects of design and construction of public (commercial) pools, spas & aquatic recreation facilities by incorporating language from the APSP-1, APSP-2, and APSP-9 Standards and incorporating best practices from state codes. Further, it separates public pools into several discreet and necessary categories (including semi-public, distinguishing between large municipal and hotel or condominium pools for example) as well as spas (inground, portable and swim).
7. **How does a State or Locality go about adopting the ISPSC?** Most states adopt building codes on a three-year cycle, with a state agency that oversees the adoption of such codes holding rulemaking hearings when reviewing new codes for consideration. A state can adopt a new code for mandatory use statewide or it can then be determined at the local level whether a particular jurisdiction wants to adopt a particular code by a local ordinance. Many times a separate state agency (health and/or environmental state agency) oversees public pools and spas; therefore, it is also imperative to work with this agency to ensure any public pool or spa rule adopts construction & design language consistent with the ISPSC.
8. **How can PHTA members help to ensure adoption of the ISPSC in their State or Locality?** They can start by discussing the ISPSC with their local building officials and inspectors, hold joint PHTA and ICC (building official & inspector) meetings to discuss when the next opening for adoption of a new code is in a particular state or locality, and then participate in the rulemaking process to support the adoption of the ISPSC. PHTA members can also encourage their building officials and inspectors to discuss with health inspectors the importance of the ISPSC, to encourage consistency between any rules (codes) adopted by the health inspectors.
9. **How will the ISPSC be enforced?** Once adopted by a state or locality, building and/or health inspectors will enforce the ISPSC through the permitting and inspection processes. Direct action against noncompliant facilities may be taken by local building or health officials enforcing state or health building codes that reference the ISPSC. Violations of the Code may prevent issuance of a permit or certificate of occupancy, subject a covered pool to closure, and/or subject the builder or owner/operator to civil liability or penalties.
10. **Does the ISPSC apply to both existing and new pools and spas?** As a design and construction code the ISPSC is intended to apply to newly constructed or renovated pools and spas (meaning those built or renovated after the date the new code goes into effect). Individual jurisdictions can elect to make certain provisions retroactive or require that when certain parts are being replaced, they must comply with the new code, i.e. drain covers or energy efficient pumps or motors.

11. How many editions of the ISPSC currently exist? The 2018 ISPSC is the 3rd and current edition available for adoption in addition to the 2015 and 2012 editions. The 2021 edition is complete and should be published in 2020, making the 4th edition available for adoption. Over 30 states and more than 250 localities have already adopted an edition of the ISPSC. More are currently in the process of adopting or considering the 2018 edition. As with all I-codes, the ISPSC undergoes a rigorous triennial review process, allowing a code to be open to improvement as new technologies and scientific advances are presented.

12. Where can I learn more about the ISPSC requirements? PHTA has developed a course, “How to Build and Comply with the ISPSC” that can be scheduled by contacting PHTA. Further, as with other I-codes, the ISPSC also provides a concise commentary book for users that provides an understanding of requirements found in the code. Information on both the ISPSC and the ISPSC Commentary can be found on the PHTA website and at www.ICCsafe.org.

13. What are the Top benefits of a state or locality adopting the ISPSC?

- The only comprehensive model residential and public swimming pool and spa code available.
- “NEW” state and local jurisdictions adopting the ISPSC are eligible for **Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)** yearly training money.
- Enhances residential pool barrier requirements, reducing drowning or near drowning.
- Eliminates entrapment incidents and ensures Virginia Graeme Baker Act compliance and eligibility under the VGB State Grant Program by reference to APSP-7 Standard for Suction Entrapment Avoidance.
- Uses time-proven ANSI/APSP standards by reference and integration.
- Contains barrier, decking and lighting provisions coordinating with the IBC.
- Covers all types of aquatic vessels, including residential and public pools, portable and in-ground spas, water parks, exercise spas, and hot tubs.
- Is based on up to date, scientific and third-party testing and research on issues such as entrapment prevention, drowning prevention, energy usage and materials and dimensions.
- Requires portable spas be certified to the latest industry standards, eliminating the need to inspect inaccessible interior components.
- The first swimming pool and spa code to address aquatic recreation facilities.
- The first swimming pool and spa code to address energy usage by including an energy standard for residential portable electric spas and for residential in-ground swimming pool and spa equipment.