

**TO:** ALL BUILDING DIVISION PERSONNEL  
**FROM:** DOUG WISE  
BUILDING DIVISION DIRECTOR  
**PREPARED BY:** BUILDING DIVISION  
**SUBJECT:** PERMITTING FOR RESIDENTIAL IN-GROUND SWIMMING  
POOLS AND SPA  
**PPM #:** PB-O-104

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ISSUE DATE  
January 14, 2020  
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EFFECTIVE DATE  
April 21, 2022  
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**PURPOSE:**

To outline the permitting requirements for in-ground swimming pools and spas.

**UPDATES:**

Future updates to this PPM are the responsibility of the Director of the Building Division, Deputy Building Official, Assistant Deputy Building Official, or Codes Product & Training Supervisor, under the authority of the Director of the Building Division.

**AUTHORITY:**

Sections 105.1, 110.1 and 111.1, Palm Beach County Amendments to the Florida Building Code, Chapter 1, Administration; Sections 424.1 and 424.2, Florida Building Code, Building Volume; and Chapter 41, Florida Building Code, Residential Volume.

**POLICY:**

All pools/spas shall be primary permits. Sub-permit applications may be accepted concurrently with the pool permit application. Pool sub-permits may be issued anytime (except for decks, which must be simultaneous) after the pool primary permit has been issued.

**PROCEDURE:**

*A. Application Process*

All permitted pools/spas will be issued as a “primary” permit with sub-permits for a barrier, electric, and any other appropriate sub-trade. If a fence or wall exists, the barrier permit will still be required, which will allow inspections to determine if any additional work is needed to convert the fence/wall to a code-compliant

pool/spa barrier.

The following Building Division forms are required to be submitted prior to permit completion, as appropriate:

1. Affidavit of Understanding. This form shall be submitted at time of pool application and signed by both the property owner and contractor indicating they understand that a 360-degree barrier is required around a pool, spa or hot tub.
2. Pool Barrier Agreement. The property owner shall sign this agreement and have it recorded in the Official Records of Palm Beach County in order to allow a neighbor's wall or fence to be utilized as part of the required barrier around a pool, spa or hot tub.

### ***B. Drawings & Specifications***

The construction drawings submitted with the application shall indicate the name and address of the pool/spa designer, who is required to be a registered engineer, licensed in the State of Florida. The engineer's signature and seal shall be affixed to the drawings. The drawings and specifications submitted for evaluation shall be specific to the pool or spa permit being sought, and shall include:

1. *Survey (unaltered), including but not limited to:*
  - a. Property lines, recorded easements, rights-of-way of record, and overhead utilities;
  - b. All existing constructed objects; and
  - c. Flood Hazard Areas.
2. *Survey/Site Plan, including but not limited to:*
  - a. Proposed location and elevation of pool/spa;
  - b. Pool/spa deck with proposed slopes, deck and pool/spa equipment;
  - c. Pool/spa barrier layout and type; and
  - d. Anticipated overall drainage of the pool site.
3. *Pool/Spa Plan Design Drawings, including but not limited to the following:*
  - a. Pool, spa & deck plan views with all dimensions and locations of entry/exit features specified, including steps, ladders, swim outs/benches, beach entries, ladders, sun shelves, etc, which constitute the total pool design.
  - b. Pool & spa profile/cross-sectional views showing the pool, spa, and other pool features, forming shell dimensions, water level depths, wall & floor slopes, wall & floor slope changes, wall & floor thicknesses,

- reinforcing steel requirements, etc.
- c. Typical details for standard step, bench, ladder, sun shelf, beach entry, vanishing edge, etc., and pool features usually associated with more-standardized pool designs.
- d. Complete site specific piping layout plan and piping sizes for the pool & spa hydraulic circulation system, showing all locations for main drains, skimmers, vacuum lines, return/supply lines, pool & spa jets, air vent/vacuum release lines (when used), control valves, by-pass valves, bubblers, etc. (also include typical piping schematic showing piping circulation system through the pool equipment network).
- e. Anti-vortex/anti-entrapment main drain and cover details & specifications; main drain sump, well point, gravel pit, hydrostatic valve information.
- f. Pool/spa coping, collar, hand-hold details, etc., with associated deck-to-coping/collar connections, with thicknesses and reinforcing requirements.
- g. Documentation of pool equipment & pad location information.
- h. Manufactured diving equipment specifications and related information on construction features associated with code specified “diving pool” types “I” through “V.”
- i. Details and specifications for all other miscellaneous pool & spa appurtenances including slides, grottos, seating pits, underwater tables and stools, step-stones, fountains, waterfalls, rock features, etc.
- j. Engineered temporary, or permanent in-place, wall shoring details, as required.
- k. Complete pool & equipment electrical wiring specifications, schematics and details pursuant to National Electrical Code Article 680.

4. *Pool & Spa Specifications, including but not limited to:*

- a. Total pool & spa volume (gallons),
- b. Surface area, and total linear perimeter dimensions,
- c. Minimum design default turn-over rate (six hour per APSP-15), and maximum auxiliary flow turn-over rate,
- d. Suction & return line maximum velocity flow rates complying with APSP-7 (anti-entrapment) and APSP-15 (hydraulic efficiency),
- e. Listing of number of skimmers, return inlets, light niches, water jets, etc., and
- f. Skimmer type and detail, and vacuum line detail.

5. *Pool/Spa Cross Section, Per ANSI/NSPI Section 5.*
6. *Electric schematic including bonding, grounding and electric light niche with proposed dimension from water surface to top of light.*

### **C. Inspections**

All in-ground swimming pool and spa installations regulated by the Florida Building Code and Amendments shall be subject to visual inspections to ascertain compliance with the code. The following minimum inspections and tests may vary depending on the type of primary structure, swimming pool, or spa:

1. *Underground Electric (bonding of commercial pool, shell steel).*
2. *Steel or structural framework (includes bonding, main drain, on private/residential pools).*
3. *Perimeter and Anti-Entrapment piping (pressure test required).*
4. *Underground Electric (for Equipotential Bond).*
5. *Deck (soil reports, if required).*
6. *Final permanent Barrier (before filling of pool/spa).*
7. *Final Electric (prior to filling of pool/spa; and may require replacement of existing light fixtures).*
8. *Final Structural.*
9. *Final Gas (if applicable).*
10. *An "as-built" special purpose pool location survey may be required on pools dimensioned from "proposed" home locations without a tie-in or final survey.*

### **D. Prohibition on Unsafe Use**

To ensure safety of swimmers, all required pool/spa inspections shall pass prior to any use of the pool/spa. Pool/spa use before issuance of a Certificate of Completion (CC) will be considered a Willful Code Violation, and the Building Division will instigate Willful Code Violation charges (seeking suspension or revocation of permit pulling privileges in Unincorporated Palm Beach County) against all involved contractors. Code Enforcement cases shall be instigated against owners who use a pool/spa before the CC is issued. Owners of new homes and/or pool builders shall each bear full and separate responsibility to ensure pool/spa safety by preventing pool/spa use prior to the CC.

### **E. Existing Wall/Fences as Barriers**

Barrier requirements on homes with existing barrier walls or fences *may* be satisfied by the party responsible for the barrier (either the Owner or the Pool/Spa Contractor) by obtaining a barrier sub-permit and promptly requesting a barrier final inspection. This inspection will be for the specific purpose of determining if the height, openings, type of closures, electric bonding and all other barrier requirements are satisfied by the existing walls, fences or natural features. Any needed work to reconfigure the existing wall or fence to obtain code compliance must be completed and approved by re-inspection prior to filling the pool/spa with water.

***F. Neighbor's Wall or Fence***

A neighbor's wall or fence may be utilized for all or part of a required pool barrier fence provided a Pool Barrier Agreement is executed and recorded in the Official Records of Palm Beach County. A copy of the recorded agreement shall be submitted to the Permit Center for inclusion with the permit for the pool barrier before the permit is completed.

***G. Natural Barriers***

A natural barrier may be utilized as a required pool barrier, provided it meets the requirements of the Florida Building Code.

  
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**DOUG WISE**  
**BUILDING DIVISION DIRECTOR**

**Supersession History**

1. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 04/01/97
2. PPM# PB-O-104, effective 04/01/97
3. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 06/01/01
4. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 07/02/01
5. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 08/14/01
6. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 08/24/01
7. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 08/28/01
8. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 10/01/01
9. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 04/19/12
10. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 7/27/16
11. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 1/14/20
12. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 9/2/21
13. PPM# PB-O-104, issued 4/21/22