



Clay County Public Health Center
800 Haines Drive
Liberty, MO 64068
Phone: 816.595.4200 FAX: 816.595.4201
Website: www.clayhealth.com

Is it Time to Replace Your Pool Drain Cover?

One of the primary purposes of the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (VGB and/or P&SS Act, 15 U.S.C. 8001 et seq.) is to prevent serious injury or death caused by drain entrapment. Drain cover manufacturers are required to provide the consumer with information that tells them when the drain cover must be replaced before they begin to crack or show other signs of failure. Many manufacturers have designated a life span of 5 years, others up to 10 years. Since numerous fittings were installed between 2008-09, many have or are about to reach the end of their stated life expectancy and need to be replaced.

Background information-

The VGB Act mandated the following changes in federal regulations for public pools/spas:

- All pool drain covers manufactured, distributed or entered into commerce on or after Dec. 19, 2008, must meet the ASME/ANSI A112.19.8 standard, or the successor standard ANSI/APSP-16 2011.
- All public pools and spas must be equipped with VGB compliant drain covers.
- Pools and spas operating off of a single main drain (other than an unblockable drain) must also add one or more of the following options*:
 - A safety vacuum release system (SVRS)
 - A suction-limiting vent system
 - A gravity drainage system
 - An automatic pump shut-off system
 - A disabled drain
 - Any other system determined by the Commission to be equally effective as, or better than, the others listed above.

*A pool may have more than one single main drain. If a pool has dual or multiple main drains more than 3 feet apart, it may be exempt from this final requirement. Pools and spas with single main drains that are unblockable are also exempt from this requirement.

What is the proper marking on approved drain covers?

Since November 12, 2008, newly made drain covers should have the "VGB 2008" marking. The drain cover manufacturer should provide a certification document with each drain cover stating that it complies with the requirements of the VGB Act. If there is no mark or you are otherwise in doubt, contact the manufacturer and ask for a copy of the certificate. Also keep a record of where and when you purchased the cover.

Covers are to display (per ASME standard):

- Use – single or multiple
- Flow rate GPM
- “Life” (number of years)
- Wall and/or floor mount
- Manufacturer’s name
- Model number

How do know when my drain cover expires?

VGB requires drain expiration information to be stamped on the top of each outlet cover and provided in the product literature. As you look at the top of the outlet cover you will see “Life: ___ Years” stamped just below the design flow rating. You can also find this information in the product literature that came with each cover that says, “Replace within ___ installed years.” This tells you when each cover must be replaced after the original installation date.

Is it important to replace drain covers on time?

Properly-fitted, secured and maintained drain covers are crucial to protecting your pool users from very serious injury or death due to entrapment while using the facility. All outlet covers degrade over time from the effects of UV light and pool chemicals. If a drain cover breaks or is not properly secured, the pool users are in imminent danger of serious injury. You can avoid this hazard by replacing your outlet covers on time.

How do I go about replacing existing outlet covers?

Be sure to consult with the manufacturer of the existing outlet covers or a commercial pool company to find replacements for the originals. You will also need to make sure your records have been updated with the most current information. A VGB Compliance Form to help you organize this information can be found at www.clayhealth.com.

Will CCPHC be checking see if outlet covers are expired?

The owner of the pool facility is primarily responsible for making sure the pool, spa or wading pool is in compliance with all applicable laws. This includes the federal VGB Act. CCPHC will be verifying that each pool is in compliance with VGB drain cover requirements by reviewing manufacturer certificates of compliance or other associated records such as a statement from the manufacturer, or installation record from a certified installer.

Additional information & resources-

www.poolsafely.gov

http://www.nspf.org/en/resources/spa_safety/vgbact.aspx

<http://apsp.org/safety/pool-spa-safety.aspx>