

RESIDENTIAL SWIMMING POOLS, SPAS & HOT TUBS

Development and Permits

Hours of operation: Monday – Friday 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Location: City Hall 2nd floor
 306 Cedar Road
 Chesapeake, Virginia 23328
 Facsimile: (757) 382-8448
 Telephone: (757) 382-6018

This publication provides permit information and guidelines for installing residential in-ground and above-ground swimming pools, spas or hot tubs. The requirements shown herein are the most common and may not represent your specific conditions at your home. You may need to obtain additional permits depending on the complexity of your project.

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Permits Required

Permits are required when constructing an in-ground, above-ground pool, spa or hot tub. Below are types of permits that may be required, depending on the complexity of your project. Building, electrical, mechanical, gas and plumbing permits can be obtained at 306 Cedar Road, 2nd floor. All permits may be obtained online through eBUILD at www.cityofchesapeake.net or <https://aca3.accela.com/Chesapeake/>

- **Building Permits** are required for the architectural and structural elements for an in-ground or above ground swimming pool, spa and hot tub. A separate building permit is required for a swimming pool, spa or hot tub barrier fence. A building permit is not required for swimming pools with a surface area of 150 square feet or less, do not exceed 5,000 gallons and are less than 24 inches in depth.
- **Electrical Permits** for electrical installations including bonding requirements for all pools, spas, and hot tubs.
- **Mechanical Permits** for natural gas and propane fueled swimming pool heaters.
- **Gas Permit** for installation of natural gas fueled and propane fueled swimming pool heaters including gas lines, equipment or moving existing lines and equipment.

Helpful Advice: Homeowners may obtain permits in their name, however, if you hire a properly licensed contractor to perform the work, it is recommended that the contractor obtain the permit and be listed as the responsible party. A permit obtained by a licensed contractor allows us to better assist you in code compliance issues for defective work. Please note, the job is not completed and the use of the pool is not allowed until all final inspections has been approved.

Before Applying for a Permit

Covenants and Deed Restrictions

Covenants and Deed Restrictions are regulations set forth by many Homeowner and Civic Associations. These regulations are private contracts between the homeowner and the Association. Some of these regulations may restrict certain aspects of construction and are not enforced by the City of Chesapeake. Please check with your Association before applying for a permit.

Building Code

Your swimming pool, spa or hot tub project is required to be in compliance with the most recent edition of the Virginia Construction Code (VCC), referenced standards and City Ordinances. These codes and standards may be purchased from local book sellers or the International Code Council at www.iccsafe.org.

Standards

The International Residential Code requires all swimming pools, spas and hot tubs comply with the reference standard of the most recent edition of the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSA) including the additional reference standards as noted in the ISPSA.

Swimming Pool Enclosure Barrier Requirements

All outdoor swimming pools, spas and hot tubs with water over 24 inches deep, must be protected by a barrier as described below. Barriers are intended to provide protection against potential drownings and near drownings by restricting access to swimming pools, spas and hot tubs. Provide an owner affidavit, notarized by the owner of the property, completely filled out at time of swimming pool permit issuance. Affidavits are available on-line and at the front counter. Swimming pool barrier safety handout brochures also available on-line and at the front counter.

- **Minimum Height:** 48 inches above grade measured from the outside face of the barrier facing away from the pool.
- **Openings:**
 - ❖ Maximum of two (2) inches from grade to the bottom of the barrier.
 - ❖ Openings must not allow passage of a four (4) inch diameter sphere.
 - ❖ When the barrier is mounted on top of a pool structure, the maximum vertical clearance from the pool structure to the bottom of the barrier is four (4) inches.
- **Climbability:**
 - ❖ Solid barriers must not have openings, such as a stone or masonry wall, must not have indentations or protrusions, except for normal construction tolerances for tooled masonry joints.
 - ❖ Where the barrier is composed of horizontal and vertical members and the distance between the tops of the horizontal members is less than forty-five (45) inches, the vertical members are less than one and three quarter (1-3/4) inches apart, the horizontal members must be located on the swimming pool side of the fence. An exception to this requirement is when the fence is 6 foot in height and the vertical members are less than one and three quarters (1-3/4) inches apart and the horizontal members, three (3) or less, are less than forty-five (45) inches apart, may be located on the out side of the fence, facing away from the pool.
 - ❖ Metal Barrier fences must be a minimum of forty eight (48) inches in height. The spacing of vertical members must be less than one and three-quarter (1-3/4) inches in width when the horizontal rails are less than forty five (45) inches apart. Metal fences that have the tops of horizontal rails more than forty five (45) inches apart must have the vertical members spaced less than four (4) inches apart. Decorative cutouts must not exceed one-three quarters (1-3/4) inches in width.
 - ❖ Where the fence barrier is made up of diagonal members, such as lattice or chain link, the measured square openings must be less than one- three quarters (1-3/4) inches. Slates can be installed in the openings to reduce large openings to one-three quarters (1-3/4) inches or less.
- **Access Gates:**
 - ❖ Access gates must comply with height, opening and climbability requirements listed above and have a locking device.
 - ❖ Pedestrian gates must swing out away from the pool and be self-closing and self-latching.
 - ❖ Gates other than pedestrian gates must have a self latching device.
 - ❖ Latches less than 54 inches above grade the release mechanism must be located on the pool side of the gate at least three (3) inches below the top of the gate. The gate and barrier must have no opening greater than one-half (1/2) inch within eighteen (18) inches of the release mechanism.
- **Door and Window Alarms:**
 - Required where a wall of a dwelling serves as part of the barrier and doors are present that provide direct access to pool. Doors or screens doors and windows must be equipped with alarms labeled as complying with UL 2017. Screen doors that have their opening device installed fifty four (54) inches above the floor and are self-closing and self-latching, are not required to have an alarm.
 - ❖ Alarms and the deactivation switch must be mounted a minimum of fifty-four (54) inches above grade.

▪ **Door and Window Alarms Continued:**

- ❖ Must be heard throughout the home.
- ❖ Must reset automatically.
- ❖ Can not be deactivated permanently.
- ❖ Alarm must be labeled as complying with UL 2017.
- ❖ Must not be removed after final inspection.

• **Safety Covers:**

- ❖ Swimming pools equipped with an electrical powered safety cover in compliance with ASTM F 1346, are exempt from all other barrier requirements. The safety cover must be labeled according to ASTM standards.
- ❖ Spas and hot tubs equipped with safety covers in compliance with ASTM F 1346, are exempt from all other barrier requirements. The safety cover must be labeled as per ASTM standards.

Electrical Bonding

- ❖ Metal parts of pools, spas and hot tubs shall be electrically bonded together in accordance with the most recent edition of the Virginia Construction Code (VCC), referenced standards and City Ordinances.
- ❖ Perimeter surfaces shall extend three (3) feet horizontally beyond the inside walls of the pool, spa or hot tub. Unpaved surfaces, poured concrete, brick pavers and other types of porous paving must be bonded to steel reinforcing, steel welded wire mesh, or a copper conductor grid around the perimeter of the pool, spa or hot tub.
- ❖ Alternate means of bonding are available when reinforcing steel or steel welded wire mesh are not being utilized. See the most recent edition of the VCC and National Electrical Code.

Building Plans

Prepare in duplicate, complete sets of construction drawings for in-ground and above-ground swimming pools as follows.

- One complete sets of building plans (see below).
- One copies of a site plan or plot plan showing where the swimming pool will be installed.

Complete set of plans: A complete set of comprehensive construction drawings (plans) must meet the requirements or show the items listed below. Plans may be submitted in person or on-line through the eBUILD system, (<https://aca3.accela.com/Chesapeake/>).

- Minimum scale of ¼ inch = 1 foot for plan and elevations and ¾ inch = 1 foot for details. All dimensions must be shown.
- Minimum sheet size is 8-1/2 x 11 inches. Maximum is size is 2x3 feet.
- Name, address and occupation of plan preparer must be on the plans.
- All concrete, masonry or gunite swimming pools plans must be prepared by a Virginia registered design professional, (RDP). Both sets of plans must bear the original seals and signatures of the designer.
- List of material specifications including, but not limited to, concrete strengths, and rebar sizes.
- For concrete, gunite and masonry in-ground swimming pools, provide wall sections with thickness and spacing of reinforcing. Plans must be fully dimensioned.
- Provide method of pool discharge drainage.
- For vinyl liner swimming pools provide a dig profile and the manufactures specifications.
- For fiberglass swimming pools, spas and hot tubs provide the manufactures specifications.
- For above ground swimming pools, provide manufactures assembly instructions.
- Show on plans the perimeter surfaces 5 feet from the swimming pool, spa or hot tub. Show paved surfaces sloping away from the swimming pools edge.
- All in-ground concrete, gunite and masonry swimming pools must be located a minimum of five feet from the existing structure. Vinyl and fiberglass swimming pools must located a minimum of 5 feet from the structure or, where the angle of repose (a line drawn at a forty-five (45) degree angle downward and perpendicular from the bottom the homes footing) goes below the proposed bottom of the swimming pool.
- Show on plans the location a ladder or swim-out at the deep end of the swimming pool, when the depth is over 5 feet deep.
- Health Department approval is required for the in-ground swimming pools location, when the existing home has a septic tank and drain field. You can contact the Health Department located at 748 Battlefield Blvd. 23320 **(757) 382-8600 Fax No. (757) 382-547-0298**

Helpful hints: For a copy of homes site survey or plot plan, review your closing documents or contact your mortgage lender. If your home is less than 3 years old, Development and Permits may have a copy of your site survey or plot plan.

Swimming Pool Fence Permit Submittals

Submit one copy of the site survey or plot plan. Show on the site or plot plan the location of new fence and existing fences. Show all proposed gates. Show pedestrian gates swinging away from the swimming pool. Indicate the height of the fence on the plan. Provide a fully dimensioned drawing or manufacturers drawing of any new proposed fences and all existing fences that are going to be utilized for a barrier for a swimming pool, spa or hot tub.

Obtaining a Permit

Permit Process

Use the on-line eBUILD system (<https://aca3.accela.com/Chesapeake/>) or visit the Development and Permits permitting office located on the 2nd floor of City Hall. Bring your plans, site or plot plans, and health department approval, if required, and begin your permitting process. When you arrive at the permit office, sign in and fill out a building permit application. The permit technicians at the front counter will direct you to the proper departments or divisions for permit approval. In most cases the Zoning Desk is the first stop. The Zoning desk is part of the front counter service with building permits.

- **Zoning Division-** located in the Development and Permits 2nd floor office, will review your survey/ plot plan to ensure the Swimming pool, spa, hot tub and fences setback and height requirements are in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance, are maintained. They will also check for to insure the swimming pool, spa or hot tub is not located in any utility easements, rights of way, wetlands or Chesapeake Bay preservation area. The Zoning technician will also review for compliance with Zoning Ordinance overall. They will review your application and start an electronic application. Zoning will also check for compliance with the flood zone ordinance.
- **Building plans review** located adjacent to the Zoning desk on the 2nd floor for City Hall. The plans examiner will review your plan for compliance with the Building code. The building permit will be issued when all the required approvals have been obtained and the fees have been paid. The permit must be posted on site until the completion of the project.

ELECTRICAL, MECHANICAL, GAS AND PLUMBING PERMIT PROCESS

Electrical, Mechanical, Gas and Plumbing permits are issued as related records to the pool's building permit. Applications for permits are available at the front counter or online at www.cityofchesapeake.net. Application for permits can also be obtained online through <https://aca3.accela.com/Chesapeake/>.

For information on the permits fees for your project, contact the following:

- Permit Desk at (757) 382-6018 or visit www.cityofchesapeake.net.
- Health Department at (757) 382-8600 or visit www.cityofchesapeake.net

After Obtaining a Permit

Before Digging Call Miss Utility

Call Miss Utility, a free service, toll free at **Phone No. 1 (800) 552-7001** to locate underground utility lines before digging. You may be financially responsible for the repair cost to damaged utility lines if you fail call before digging.

Inspection requirements

- A copy of the building plans, specifications and site or plot plan must be available at the job site during the inspection for the inspector to review the proposed construction.
- The permit will expire unless an approved inspection every six months on at least one of the project's permits. Request for permit extensions from the building official must be in writing before the permit expires.

Inspection requirements continued

- Please review the inspection timing checklist below before scheduling an inspection.

Scheduling an Inspection

It is the responsibility of the permit holder to schedule an inspection when the stages of construction are reached that require an inspection and before concealment. Ladders, scaffolds and testing equipment required to complete an inspection must be provided. Inspections may be requested as listed below:

1. Call **(757) 382-City (382-2489)** "Call Center" and schedule your inspection. The call center is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Have your permit number ready. You can also request a.m. or p.m. inspection. You can also leave important instructions for the inspector, such as lock box codes.
2. You can request the inspection using the online request method at www.cityofchesapeake.net or <https://aca3.accela.com/Chesapeake/>. The request must be submitted prior to 12:00 midnight the day before your requested date of inspection. Inspections scheduled on a holiday or Saturday and Sunday will be scheduled for the next business day.

INSPECTION SCHEDULING CHECKLIST (As Applicable)

Inspection Type	Requirements prior to the request inspection
	Approval must be obtained before proceeding to the next inspection.
Electrical Rough-in:	Inspection of the electrical components prior to concealment. This includes all wiring and Receptacle and switch boxes are installed.
Gas Pressure Test:	Inspection prior to concealment of the gas line components under pressure.
Plumbing Rough-in:	Inspection of the water, sewer and some fixtures prior to concealment.
Electrical Service:	Inspection if applicable of the electrical service before concealment.
Final Electrical:	At the completion of the electrical system.
Final Mechanical;	At the completion of the mechanical system.
Final Gas:	At the completion of the gas system.
Final plumbing:	At the completion of the Plumbing system.
Final Building;	At the completion of the project after all of the trades have received final approval. All well and septic systems must be installed and approved by the Health Department before the Final building inspection can be performed. All work shown on the approved plans must be complete before the final building inspection can be approved. If applicable, the flood certificate must be submitted before the final inspection. The final grade must be established.

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