

# QualityPool® Guidelines 2024



## Risk assessment and management

Risk management identification and planning systems provide a framework for identifying and managing hazards in the pool area. Types of questions that should be asked include:

- What could go wrong?
- Why could it go wrong?
- How can we stop this happening?

It is strongly recommended that management establish a policy for the use of the pool, which should be included in your Normal/Standard Operating Procedures (NOP/SOP).

The policy should include rules for use of the pool and equipment, the location of amenities, and a safety code for all pool users. For example:

- Never swim alone;
- Never swim while under the influence of alcohol or drugs;
- Take additional care if you have a medical condition;
- Dangerous behaviour is prohibited (e.g. running, bombing, diving).

Use the examples in the Aquatics Facility Guidelines to help you develop your own policy and NOP/SOP document.

## Pool Water Quality

Efficient mechanical systems and chemical treatment keep pool water safe and hygienic. The NZ Standard of Pool Water Quality NZS5826:2010 governs water quality in all swimming pools to ensure that it is maintained at safe chemical and microbiological levels to:

- protect swimmers from unsafe bacteria
- safeguard swimmers against chemical burns
- minimise damage to the pool and associated plant and equipment
- keep pools aesthetically clean and sparkling.

Contact [Standards New Zealand](https://standards.govt.nz/) for a copy of NZS5826:2010.

## Supervision

Children have the right to be protected. The only way to guarantee their safety is to prevent them gaining access to your pool without adult supervision.

The Pool Alone Policy, developed in 1997 and revised in 2002, states: “Children under eight years old must be actively supervised by a caregiver aged 16 or over”.

‘Active supervision’ means watching the child at all times and being able to provide immediate assistance.

The policy, endorsed by Water Safety New Zealand, can be legally binding if local authorities pass a bylaw on swimming pool use and management. It was established for aquatic facilities with professional lifeguards on duty and should be the absolute minimum policy for your pool.

The Building (Pools) Amendment Act 2016 repealed the Fencing of Swimming Pools Act 1987. [Learn about the fencing of pools requirements legislation.](#)



## Emergency Procedures

An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) specifies actions to be taken in the event of emergency. For every emergency scenario, the EAP should:

- Assign responsibility for key tasks
- Establish a chain of command
- Specify who does what, where, and when.

Ensure all staff are aware of the EAP and its requirements. Incorporate relevant emergency information into your pool signage for guests' reference. Find more information in the [Aquatic Facility Guidelines](#).

## Health and Safety

Safety is paramount in any aquatic environment. The [Water Safety New Zealand Drowning Prevention Report 2023](#) shows that there were 11 drownings in pool environments last year, almost double the 10-year average of 5.8.

A Health and Safety plan should be part of every workplace. Guidelines and templates can be downloaded from [the WorkSafe website](#). Ensure you include:

- Identification and management of hazards, including a hazard register.
- Processes for recording and, investigating employee and customer accidents.
- Processes for near-miss recording and reporting.
- Processes for recording and reporting notifiable incidents.

In accordance with the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act 1996 (HSNO), you must have signage, spill kits, personal protective equipment, and material safety data sheets if substances identified as hazardous are used or stored in your facility.

The [Hazardous Substances Toolbox](#) helps you calculate the key HSNO controls you need in place, based on the hazardous substances you use and store. Information and tool kits for the [Health and Safety at Work \(Hazardous Substances\) Regulations](#) are available on the WorkSafe website.

## Signage

Every pool should have safety signage that includes:

- Pool rules about jumping, running, diving, etc.
- Who to contact in an emergency (e.g. 111).
- First aid kit location.
- Supervision rules.
- Pool depth
- Basic life support.

Find pool signage examples on the [Recreation Aotearoa website](#).

