

FLORIDA BUILDING COMMISSION
INFORMATIONAL NOTICE ON SWIMMING POOL DRAINS
NOTICE #3
April 1, 2002

In consultation with the Plumbing Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and its Pool & Spa Drain Safety Subcommittee, the Florida Building Commission staff developed information necessary to provide for an interim clarification to the intent of Section 424.2.21.3 of the Florida Building Code which states: "An approved main outlet shall be provided at the deepest point in every pool for emptying or circulation, or both, of the water in the pool."

Background:

- Above ground swimming pools are not designed to have a bottom drain. A Petitioner at the March 25, 2002, meeting of the Plumbing Technical Advisory Committee and its Pool & Spa Drain Safety Subcommittee recently met on this issue: Are bottom drains required for above ground pools by section 424.2.21.3?
- The "main outlet" requirement falls under the "pool fittings" section. It applies to "every pool". The definition of "Swimming Pool, Private" includes "any structure, located in a residential area, that is intended for swimming or recreational bathing and contains water over 24 inches deep including but not limited to inground, aboveground, and onground swimming pools, hot tubs, and non-portable spas".
- The requirement for a "main outlet" in all pools does not specify that said outlet has to be an integral part of the pool, just that it shall be provided at the deepest point in the pool for emptying or circulation or both of the pool water. Should the pool need to be emptied, it could be fit with an appliance, a pump, which would be available to drain the pool.
- Section 424.2.21.3 requires the "main outlet" to be "approved", which means it is subject to the judgement of the local building official. Section 424.2.5.1, Approval and authorization, states: "The provisions of this code are not intended to prevent the use of any alternate material, method of construction, appliance or equipment, provided any such alternate has been first approved and its use authorized by the administrative authority."
- Above-ground swimming pool circulation requirements are covered under the 1999 ANSI/NSPI-4, Standard for Above-ground/On-ground Residential Swimming Pools. The 1999 ANSI/NSPI-4 is the code minimum engineering design standard for the above-ground swimming pool (see s. 424.2.6 and meeting the requirements of this standard will satisfy the requirements of s. 4124.2.21.3 with regard to circulation.
- At the March 25th Commission meeting, the Plumbing TAC and its Pool & Spa Drain Safety Subcommittee, recommended that the Florida Building Commission undertake the following clarification: "**The pool or auxiliary pump could be used to drain the pool and meet the requirements of section 424.2.21.3**".

Staff provide the following guidance in consultation with the Plumbing TAC and its Pool & Spa Drain Safety Subcommittee: Under the provisions of section 424.2.5.1, the pool or an auxiliary pump could be used to drain the pool and meet the requirements of section 424.2.21.3.