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SAFETY COVERS FOR PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS AND WADING POOLS

(For the protection of children 5 years of age and under)

STANDARDS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA
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THE FOLLOWING SCIENTIFIC, INDUSTRIAL, CONSUMER AND GOVERNMENTAL organizations and departments were officially represented on the committee entrusted with the preparation of this standard:

Amateur Swimming Association, N.S.W.
Associated Chambers of Manufactures of Australia
Australian Consumers Association
Australian Federation of Consumer Organizations
Australian Retailers Association
Country Women's Association of Australia
Local Government Association of N.S.W.
Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Victoria
Ministry of Local Government, S.A.
National Council of Women of Australia
Plastics Institute of Australia Inc.
Queensland Swimming Pools Association
Royal Life Saving Society of Australia
Swimming Pools Association of N.S.W.
Water Safety Council, N.S.W.

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The publications of the Standards Association are subject to regular review. Suggestions for improvements to published standards, addressed to the head office of the Association, are welcomed.

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AUSTRALIAN STANDARD SPECIFICATION

SAFETY COVERS FOR PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS AND WADING POOLS

(For the protection of children 5 years of age and under)

AS 2020 — 1977

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PREFACE

This standard for safety covers for private swimming pools was prepared by the Association's Committee on Swimming Pool Covers at the request of the Minister of Consumer Affairs in Victoria. Its purpose is to specify a means of protecting children of 5 years of age and under against drowning in private swimming pools.

Characteristics of this age group were used as a basis for the specification of the safety cover's performance, as the statistics show that the majority of children who have drowned in private pools have been in this age group. This is in line with existing safety regulations, in some Australian States, which relate to this age group.

Compliance with this standard is established by performance tests intended to prove that a child's face cannot be submerged in water, either as a result of the child's falling between the edge of the cover and the side of the pool, or when the cover is deflected to the extent that water flows onto its surface. This standard does not cover aspects of design, other than those relating to safety.

It was recognized by the committee that solid fabric covers could allow rainwater to be retained on the surface, and covers designed to float could allow water from the pool to seep onto their surface. The committee agreed that, for the name 'safety cover' to be applied, the design must incorporate features which will prevent these hazards.

Covers may be made of any material including metal, wire mesh and plastics-coated and plastics mesh fabrics. The committee believed that consumers should be given an indication of the life expectancy of a cover and this requirement has been included in Clause 7, Marking. However, as the life of a plastics cover will be dependent upon its ability to withstand ultraviolet degradation, the committee decided that the manufacturer of the cover should set the life expectancy on the advice of the plastics material manufacturer, who will have had practical experience of his material's weathering characteristics under normal conditions of use in outdoor situations.

Another design aspect that the committee agreed must be met is the cover's ability to be easily and quickly fastened in place or removed. This has been covered by the requirements that, firstly, the cover can be handled by one adult, and secondly, that it can be placed in position and fastened or removed within a period of 5 minutes. Unless these conditions could be met the owner of the pool would be discouraged from covering it at all times when not in use. Ease of use was considered by the committee to be a key factor in safety performance.

The committee responsible for the preparation of this standard emphasizes the fact that no safety measure eliminates the need for the constant supervision of children by a responsible adult in the vicinity of a swimming pool.

It is strongly recommended that in view of the nature of this standard, manufacturers and purchasers should make use of the scheme operated by the Standards Association of Australia (see Note 3 to Clause 6) whereby the product may bear the certification mark of the SAA.

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STANDARDS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

Australian Standard Specification for SAFETY COVERS FOR PRIVATE SWIMMING POOLS AND WADING POOLS

(For the protection of children 5 years of age and under)

1 SCOPE. This specification sets out requirements for safety covers for swimming pools and wading pools, which, when correctly installed and used in accordance with specified instructions, are intended to reduce the risk of drowning by inhibiting the access of children 5 years of age and under to the water.

The specification includes performance tests to prove the safety aspects of a design, and marking requirements.

NOTE: Covers complying with this specification may also be used to keep a pool free from debris, etc.

2 DEFINITIONS. For the purpose of this specification the following definitions apply:

Cover — the total unit including major component, anchors, ties and anchorages or fastening mechanisms designed to provide a barrier to the pool.

Major component — the fabric or material which covers the surface of the water and/or pool.

Tie — a means of attaching an anchor to the major component.

Anchor — a device fitted to the major component and designed to connect with an anchorage to hold the major component in position.

Anchorage — a device or fitting to which an anchor is connected and locked.

3 MATERIALS. Only materials known to be harmless to health shall be used. All materials and components shall be durable and satisfactory for their intended purpose under the conditions prevailing at the site. Where an open mesh material is used for the major component, it shall comply with the requirements of Clause 4.7.

NOTE: Materials that could be damaged by tearing, stretching, piercing or cutting should not be used in locations where such damage could occur through normal usage.