

**PROTECTIVE COVERS FOR HOT TUBS**

**DISCUSSION**

Hot tubs that exceed 600 mm in water depth are considered swimming pools in accordance with the definition in Sentence 1.4.1.2.(1) of Division A of the Alberta Building Code 2006. As such, Sentences 7.3.2.3.(1) and (2) apply when they are installed outdoors at a single family dwelling.

ASTM publishes standard F1346-91, "Standard Performance Specification for Safety Covers and Labelling Requirements for All Covers for Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs." This standard contains performance requirements for hot tub covers to prevent unintentional drowning including, but not limited to:

1. A static load test of 220 kg for covers greater than 2.4 m in diameter,
2. A static load test of 125 kg for covers less than 2.4 m in diameter, and
3. Deflection tests to prohibit the passage of a test object.

**CODE REFERENCES**

Article 7.3.2.3. states:

**7.3.2.3. Fence and Gate Design and Construction**

- 1) The entire area of an outdoor *swimming pool* shall be protected by a fence, *building* wall or enclosure that can prevent access by unauthorized persons and its height above the outside ground level shall not be less than
  - a) 1.8 m for a *private swimming pool*, and
  - b) 2.0 m for all other *swimming pools*.
- 2) An opening for access through a fence around a *swimming pool* or a *private swimming pool* shall be protected by a gate that is
  - a) the same height as the fence,
  - b) equipped with a self-closing device,
  - c) equipped with a self-latching device on the inside of the gate located not less than 1.5 m above the ground level, and
  - d) capable of being locked.

Unless stated otherwise, all Code references in this STANDATA are to Division B of the Alberta Building Code 2006.

**VARIANCE**

A fence and gate conforming to Sentences 7.3.2.3.(1) and (2) need not be provided around an exterior hot tub for a single family dwelling provided:

1. The hot tub does not exceed 2.4 m across the widest portion of the water's surface.
2. The hot tub is provided with a cover that
  - a) has been designed and constructed in conformance with ASTM F1346-91, "Standard Performance Specification for Safety Covers and Labelling Requirements for All Covers for Swimming Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs," and
  - b) is provided with lockable devices to prevent access to the water by unauthorized persons.

This VARIANCE is applicable throughout the province of Alberta.