



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INFORMATIONAL BULLETIN

TO: Orange County Public Pool Owners/Operators

SUBJECT: Requirements for the Use of Floating Pool Covers/Bubble Covers



Floating pool covers are designed to float directly on the water surface and are not securely anchored. Floating pool covers range in style from a bubble type cover to a plastic blanket. Some of these covers are held down with sandbags or other weights placed on the deck. However, such covers are not securely anchored and **are not considered pool safety covers.**

Floating pool covers, if used improperly, are considered by many pool safety experts to be very dangerous. They are opaque or translucent, not transparent, thus making it impossible to clearly see what lies underneath them. Secondly, when placed upon the water the cover gives the appearance that it can be walked on, especially to the eyes of a small child.

Since they are not attached to the pool, they can collapse under the weight of a child and possibly result in drowning. Tests have shown that floating pool covers will return to their original position 10 to 20 seconds after something has fallen underneath them, thereby concealing a potential drowning victim. There have been documented cases of children being trapped and hidden from view under such covers who were not found until brain damage or death had occurred.



For safety reasons, floating pool covers are only permitted when all of the following conditions are met:

1. The pool must be segregated from all dwelling units by an approved fence or enclosure. Floating pool covers will not be accepted on courtyard pools, where there is no fence between the living quarters and the pool.
2. The pool is under the supervision of management personnel or other responsible persons who have sole access to the pool area when it is not open for use. The pool area must be locked to prevent any usage of the pool when the cover is placed on the pool water. The pool may not be reopened for use until the responsible person removes the pool cover and properly stores it.
3. The pool cover, when not in use, must be rolled up and stored at least four (4) feet from the pool. In the case of spa pools, the cover should be physically removed from the pool area to prevent bathers from re-covering the spa pool.

Please contact your Environmental Health Specialist or this office if you have any further questions.

If at any time a representative from this department feels that the floating pool cover is being used in an unsafe manner it may be ordered removed from the swimming pool or spa and/or the pool may be ordered closed.