

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 7, 2022

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International Swimming Pool and Spa Code to Become Law in Maryland

The code will strengthen pool and spa safety and efficiency statewide

Annapolis, MD – Governor Larry Hogan announced that House Bill 303 will become law in Maryland and greatly advance swimming pool and spa safety and efficiency throughout the state. House Bill 303, sponsored by Delegate Dana Stein (District 11, Baltimore County) and Senator Cory McCray (District 45, Baltimore City), will require Maryland to use the 2021 International Swimming Pool and Spa Code (ISPSC) as the new minimum standard, effective December 31, 2023, for building swimming pools and spas.

The adoption of the ISPSC enhances the safety and efficiency of pools and spas by applying a consistent, uniform construction and safety code that is based on proven best practices for drowning prevention and energy efficiency. The ISPSC is currently used in over 30 states in the U.S., including Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia and New Jersey.

“On behalf of the industry and diverse coalition of supporters, we applaud Governor Hogan for passing and enacting HB 303,” said Justin Wiley, PHTA Vice President of Government Relations, Standards and Codes. “This safety-focused law takes a significant step toward modernizing Maryland’s building codes and standards for swimming pools and spas.”

House Bill 303 passed with overwhelming bipartisan support in the House of Delegates and the Senate. The bill was supported by the International Code Council, Pool and Hot Tub Alliance (PHTA) and a coalition of businesses, regulators, first responders and safety professionals, including the Maryland Chamber of Commerce, the Maryland Building Officials Association, the Maryland Fire Marshal Committee, the Maryland State Firefighter’s Association and the National Drowning Prevention Alliance.

“This adoption ensures a safe and comprehensive code for the design and construction of swimming pools in Maryland,” said Frank Quillen, President of the Maryland Building Officials Association. “The ISPSC coordinates with the other building safety codes adopted in Maryland to create a consistent regulatory framework for both building safety professionals and for builders.”

The legislation requires the Maryland Department of Labor to adopt the ISPSC as a baseline code for the state and allows for local jurisdictions to enforce and amend the code as necessary. More importantly, the ISPSC correlates with local laws and regulations that are already established.

“The adoption, implementation and enforcement of modern codes and standards play an important role in keeping communities safe, resilient and affordable” said Gabe Maser, Code Council Senior Vice President of Government Relations. “The Code Council commends Maryland for the adoption of the International Swimming Pool and Spa Code and their efforts to ensure the state is using the most up-to-date safety and efficiency standards.”

The signing and implementation of House Bill 303 will afford all jurisdictions access to grants for training on the ISPSC under the Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act (VGBA). The VGBA is a [United States](#) law named after Virginia Graeme Baker, who died after sustaining a [pool suction-drain injury](#) in June 2002. It is incorporated as Title 14 of the U.S. [Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007](#) (EISA Title 14, Pub.L. 110-140). This act became enforceable law on December 19, 2008.

The incorporation of the ISPSC in Maryland will follow the same process the state already uses for most building codes in practice, such as the International Residential Code (IRC), International Plumbing Code (IPC), International Mechanical Code (IMC), International Fuel Gas Code (IFGC) and the International Building Code (IBC) which are enforced and amended by the counties.

“The PHTA Mid-Atlantic Chapter is happy to see that Governor Hogan is allowing the ISPSC to become law. This will help to improve safety around public and private pools and spas across the great state of Maryland,” said Brian St. Clair, President of the PHTA Mid-Atlantic chapter. “The public can find comfort in knowing that the ISPSC will hold companies to the highest safety standards, helping to reduce drownings, ER visits, and accidents around pools. It will also help to consolidate code compliance for new construction and renovations of pools and spas, helping to streamline the building process for local companies. Thank you, Governor Hogan, for helping to keep Marylanders safe while enjoying the pools and spas across this wonderful state!”

You can view the 2021 ISPSC Digital Code [here](#).

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About the International Code Council

The [International Code Council](#) is the leading global source of model codes and standards and

building safety solutions. Code Council codes, standards and solutions are used to ensure safe, affordable and sustainable communities and buildings worldwide.

About the Pool & Hot Tub Alliance

The [Pool & Hot Tub Alliance \(PHTA\)](#), a non-profit organization with over 3,600 members from around the world, was established in 1956 to support, promote, and protect the common interests of the \$36.5B pool, hot tub and spa industry. PHTA provides education, advocacy, standards development, research, and market growth to increase our members' professionalism, knowledge and profitability. Additionally, PHTA facilitates the expansion of swimming, water safety and related research and outreach activities aimed at introducing more people to swimming, making swimming environments safer and keeping pools open to serve communities.