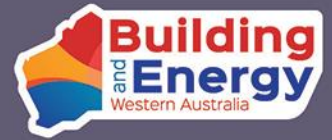




Government of Western Australia
Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety



Progress report

**Local governments' four yearly
inspections of private swimming
pool safety barriers**

2020/21

BUILDING COMMISSIONER'S FOREWORD

I am pleased to present the annual *Progress report - Local governments' four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2020/21* (Report). The Report details individual local government private swimming pool safety barrier inspection figures for the 2020/21 period, as voluntarily reported by those local governments.

Drowning of young children is preventable, yet remains one of the leading causes of accidental death for young children, with swimming pools generally being the main water body involved. While adult supervision within arm's reach is the most effective way to prevent these drowning incidents, mandatory pool safety barriers, local government inspections and public education are extremely important in the overall strategy to prevent or reduce these tragedies. The results of these efforts can be seen in the [Royal Life Saving National Drowning Report 2020](#), which showed that there were zero toddler drowning deaths in Western Australia in 2019/2020. While this is an amazing result, it is important that we do not become complacent.

Safety barrier inspections, carried out by local governments, help ensure that safety barriers remain compliant and are being maintained properly. They also serve as an important reminder for pool owners of their responsibilities. These inspections are an important task and I commend local governments for their efforts.

In recent times, due to COVID-19, the ability of local governments to conduct these inspections has been difficult. I am pleased that local governments have been able to persevere through these difficulties to continue this important work.

While this Report shows a low percentage of overdue inspections, there remains room for improvement. It is disappointing that 14 local governments did not provide data and that some of those that did reported significant numbers of overdue inspections. I remain confident that these local governments will do their best to improve and hope that the continued public reporting of this information will help encourage this.



Kristin Berger
Building Commissioner



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Report has been prepared by the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety - Building and Energy Division (Building and Energy).

Pool safety barriers are known to be effective in helping to restrict the unsupervised access of young children into swimming pool areas, reducing the likelihood of a drowning incident.

Local governments are required to inspect the safety barriers of private swimming pools within their district at intervals not exceeding four years. These inspections monitor the compliance of those safety barriers. Local governments have powers under the *Building Act 2011* to assist them enforce compliance.

Local governments were formally requested to voluntarily provide data on their pool safety barrier inspection progress in June 2021. An early notification email was sent in March, and a reminder email in July. The due date was 2 August 2021. Some responses were received after this date and have been included in the Report.

Of 139 local governments in Western Australia, 125 provided a response prior to the preparation of this Report. Unless otherwise noted, where a local government's data was not received it has been recorded in the Report as 'Data not provided by deadline'.

This Report is the third annual report on the progress of local governments' pool inspection programs and is in response to recommendation 7 of the Ombudsman WA report [*Investigation into ways to prevent or reduce deaths of children by drowning*](#), tabled in Parliament on 23 November 2017. A report for the 2019/20 period was not published due to the impact of COVID-19 on local governments' ability to conduct inspections.

Building and Energy is currently undertaking a review of the regulatory requirements for pools and their safety barriers. It is anticipated that the provision of the data presented in this Report will become a mandatory requirement for local governments.

Some local governments, in their responses, detailed reasons why some inspections had not been conducted within the four year maximum. These included:

- the impact of COVID-19 on their ability to inspect;
- difficulties in organising access to some properties; and
- staff resourcing.

Summary	2020/21	2018/19	2017/18
Total number of pools	166,709	161,960	159,183
Total number pools overdue	2,673	2,545	3,632
Total pools overdue %	1.6%	1.6%	2.3%
Local governments with overdue inspections	54	40	44
Local governments that did not provide data	14	17	20

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Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2020/21	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
City of Albany	134	31	0	0.0%
City of Armadale	5,191	913	78	1.5%
Shire of Ashburton	531	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Augusta-Margaret River	256	3	0	0.0%
Town of Bassendean	832	400	0	0.0%
City of Bayswater	2,875	678	0	0.0%
City of Belmont	1,276	297	0	0.0%
Shire of Beverley	30	12	0	0.0%
Shire of Boddington	56	15	1	1.8%
Shire of Boyup Brook	4	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes	48	17	0	0.0%
Shire of Brookton	18	0	1	5.6%
Shire of Broome	1,682	414	189	11.2%
Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Bruce Rock	8	0	0	0.0%
City of Bunbury	1,313	316	44	3.4%
City of Busselton	1,564	551	2	0.1%
Town of Cambridge	3,495	840	140	4.0%
City of Canning	6,183	2,110	20	0.3%
Shire of Capel	1,070	304	0	0.0%
Shire of Carnamah	Data not provided by deadline			

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Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2020/21	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Carnarvon	107	3	56	52.3%
Shire of Chapman Valley	107	9	0	0.0%
Shire of Chittering	67	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Christmas Island	Data not provided by deadline			
Town of Claremont	892	198	0	0.0%
City of Cockburn	7,607	2,196	21	0.3%
Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands	2	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Collie	338	95	1	0.3%
Shire of Coolgardie	100	69	15	15.0%
Shire of Coorow	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Corrigin	19	0	0	0.0%
Town of Cottesloe	725	399	40	5.5%
Shire of Cranbrook	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Cuballing	10	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Cue	4	4	0	0.0%
Shire of Cunderdin	9	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Dalwallinu	16	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Dandaragan	34	11	1	2.9%
Shire of Dardanup	847	293	0	0.0%
Shire of Denmark	11	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Derby-West Kimberley	85	76	6	7.1%

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Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2020/21	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup	184	5	46	25.0%
Shire of Dowerin	6	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Dumbleyung	12	3	0	0.0%
Shire of Dundas	Data not provided by deadline			
Town of East Fremantle	613	333	280	45.7%
Shire of East Pilbara	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Esperance	129	73	9	7.0%
Shire of Exmouth	126	19	0	0.0%
City of Fremantle	958	154	72	7.5%
Shire of Gingin	262	20	0	0.0%
Shire of Gnowangerup	11	1	0	0.0%
Shire of Goomalling	Data not provided by deadline			
City of Gosnells	7,432	2,777	0	0.0%
City of Greater Geraldton	1,890	481	85	4.5%
Shire of Halls Creek	6	6	0	0.0%
Shire of Harvey	1,490	478	0	0.0%
Shire of Irwin	93	29	2	2.2%
Shire of Jerramungup	1	0	0	0.0%
City of Joondalup	22,815	5,647	22	0.1%
City of Kalamunda	5,701	1,690	50	0.9%
City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder	2,643	529	77	2.9%

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Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2020/21	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
City of Karratha	1,860	645	2	0.1%
Shire of Katanning	107	50	11	10.3%
Shire of Kellerberrin	21	0	1	4.8%
Shire of Kent	6	1	0	0.0%
Shire of Kojonup	17	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Kondinin	3	2	0	0.0%
Shire of Koorda	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Kulin	7	7	0	0.0%
City of Kwinana	1,779	325	78	4.4%
Shire of Lake Grace	9	4	0	0.0%
Shire of Laverton	2	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Leonora	6	0	0	0.0%
City of Mandurah	5,053	1,487	111	2.2%
Shire of Manjimup	63	9	0	0.0%
Shire of Meekatharra	2	2	0	0.0%
City of Melville	10,476	3,418	348	3.3%
Shire of Menzies	0	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Merredin	98	46	4	4.1%
Shire of Mingenew	24	0	3	12.5%
Shire of Moora	76	18	10	13.2%
Shire of Morawa	Data not provided by deadline			

Where total number of pools is recorded as '0' this indicates the local government has no registered pools in their jurisdiction.

Progress report - Local governments' four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2020/21

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2020/21	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Town of Mosman Park	902	147	1	0.1%
Shire of Mount Magnet	8	6	0	0.0%
Shire of Mount Marshall	3	3	0	0.0%
Shire of Mukinbudin	1	0	1	100.0%
Shire of Mundaring	3,749	600	1	0.0%
Shire of Murchison	0	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Murray	1,187	463	0	0.0%
Shire of Nannup	12	1	0	0.0%
Shire of Narembeen	12	8	0	0.0%
Shire of Narrogin	132	35	0	0.0%
City of Nedlands	2,822	834	0	0.0%
Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku	0	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Northam	525	131	2	0.4%
Shire of Northampton	155	16	62	40.0%
Shire of Nungarin	0	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Peppermint Grove	279	76	0	0.0%
Shire of Perenjori	Data not provided by deadline			
City of Perth	217	185	0	0.0%
Shire of Pingelly	35	14	0	0.0%
Shire of Plantagenet	14	0	14	100.0%
Town of Port Hedland	944	132	5	0.5%

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Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2020/21	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Quairading	49	21	0	0.0%
Shire of Ravensthorpe	0	0	0	0.0%
City of Rockingham	10,309	3,197	63	0.6%
Shire of Sandstone	4	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale	2,082	633	0	0.0%
Shire of Shark Bay	5	0	0	0.0%
City of South Perth	2,867	1,133	68	2.4%
City of Stirling	12,710	3,003	18	0.1%
City of Subiaco	780	360	8	1.0%
City of Swan	8,353	2,381	33	0.4%
Shire of Tammin	0	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Three Springs	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Toodyay	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Trayning	3	2	0	0.0%
Shire of Upper Gascoyne	1	1	0	0.0%
Town of Victoria Park	855	659	196	22.9%
Shire of Victoria Plains	8	0	0	0.0%
City of Vincent	1,236	180	78	6.3%
Shire of Wagin	72	41	31	43.1%
Shire of Wandering	18	1	1	5.6%
City of Wanneroo	14,067	3,522	46	0.3%

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Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2020/21	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Waroona	186	43	47	25.3%
Shire of West Arthur	4	4	0	0.0%
Shire of Westonia	0	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Wickpin	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Williams	27	27	0	0.0%
Shire of Wiluna	1	1	0	0.0%
Shire of Wongan-Ballidu	33	32	0	0.0%
Shire of Woodanilling	9	9	0	0.0%
Shire of Wyalkatchem	8	5	0	0.0%
Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley	307	45	11	3.6%
Shire of Yalgoo	0	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Yilgarn	22	0	3	13.6%
Shire of York	169	5	158	93.5%
TOTAL:	166,709	46,469	2,673	1.6%

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