



CODE TOPICS

2020 FBC 7th ED, SECTION 454.2, RESIDENTIAL POOLS

DEEP AREA EGRESS

TOPIC BACKGROUND

This is a relatively simple topic, however the requirement changed in the recent code. When the current code adopts ANSI 5 2011, it changed the requirement from having a bench in deep areas 5 ft deep or greater to areas more than 5 ft deep. While the intent of the code is simply to base the requirement on the depth based on normal operation with water level a middle of waterline tile, there have been some reviewers reach beyond the intent and base the requirement on some flooded pool level.

WHAT THE CODE SAYS

First, 2017 FBC 6th Ed, Section 454.2.18 states the requirement:

454.2.18 Ladders and steps. All pools whether public or private shall be provided with a ladder or steps in the shallow end where water depth exceeds 24 inches (610 mm). In private pools where water depth exceeds 5 feet (1524 mm) there shall be ladders, stairs or underwater benches/swim-outs in the deep end. Where manufactured diving equipment is to be used, benches or swim-outs shall be recessed or located in a corner.

Then, along with section 35 of the FBC that adopts reference standards, Section 454.2.6.1 adopts certain ANSI/APSP Standards as Conformance Standards. Specifically:

454.2.6 Private swimming pools.

454.2.6.1 Conformance standard. Design, construction and workmanship shall be in conformity with the requirements of ANSI/APSP/ICC 3, ANSI/APSP/ICC 4, ANSI/ APSP/ICC 5, ANSI/APSP/ICC 6, and ANSI/ APSP/ICC 7.

Finally, ANSI/APSP/ICC-5 2011 Section 6.1.1 of Entry/Exit says:

6.1.1 A secondary means of entry/exit shall be provided in the deep area of the pool if the water depth exceeds 5 ft (1.52 m).

REQUIRED AT PLAN REVIEW

When the plan indicates the deep area water depth of MORE than 5 ft, a form of egress needs to be provided, typically a bench. A member of the ANSI/APSP/ICC writing committee has also offered that the intention of the standard is that the egress may be located in the deep “AREA”, not strictly the deep “END.” This means that the egress may be located to the shallow side of the drain and doesn’t have to be located to the deep end beyond the drain.

REQUIRED DURING INSPECTION

Simply view the egress is installed according to plan and be aware of field changes during construction

Disclaimer: This is offered as summary and guidance on code requirements. This does not authorize a code violation.