



ICC NEWS RELEASE

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www.iccsafe.org

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“Code Officials: Surround Your Building with Safety” is the Theme for Building Safety Month Week 3

Take special precautions to ensure outdoor areas are safe

As families head outdoors to enjoy nice weather in spring and summer, special precautions should be taken to ensure outdoor areas are safe from potential hazards. Swimming pools, decks, barbecue grills, gardening tools, fertilizers and lawn toys all pose risks to children and adults.

“Building Safety Month, celebrated in May of each year, is the perfect time to focus on outdoor safety,” said International Code Council Board President Stephen D. Jones, CBO. “As the old saying goes, ‘An ounce of prevention is always worth a pound of cure,’ and in this instance prevention can mean an enjoyable—and safe—warm weather season.”

Since 1980, Building Safety Month has been an annual public safety awareness campaign. The theme for week three of Building Safety Month 2014, May 19-25, sponsored by the [Laborers’ International Union of North America](#) (LiUNA), is “Code Officials: Surround Your Building with Safety.” More information about Building Safety Month and outdoor safety is available at www.buildingsafetymonth.org.

“We are proud to be a Building Safety Month sponsor,” said LiUNA General President Terry O’Sullivan. “With a highly trained, highly skilled workforce and a network of training centers that spans the nation, it is our priority to make our communities safer.”

Every year, an alarming number of water-related deaths and injuries occur in and around swimming pools. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission estimates that 250 children under the age of five drown in swimming pools annually and more than 2,700 children seek medical treatment for pool-related accidents. The combination of proper and safe construction by qualified

contractors and following building safety codes, such as the ICC's *International Swimming Pool and Spa Code*, can help prevent such tragedies.

Code requirements include four-foot fencing or barriers around pools with more than 24 inches of water, any gates in the fencing to be self-closing and self-latching, and drain covers that are properly fitted and paired or have vacuum suction releases to prevent underwater entrapments.

Most experts agree that the average life expectancy of a wood deck is 10 to 15 years, and with millions of decks in the United States that are beyond their useful life there is substantial risk for collapses and personal injuries. Since 2003, deck collapses have caused thousands of injuries and several fatalities. Homeowners are encouraged to evaluate the safety and construction of their new or existing decks. Warning signs to look for include loose or wobbly railings or support beams, missing or loose screws that connect a deck to the house, corrosion, rot and cracks.

More backyard safety tips include placing grills away from siding, deck railings and out from under eaves and overhanging branches; keeping children away from grills and fires; checking propane cylinder hoses for leaks before use; and keeping steps, sidewalks and patios in good repair. Safety tips are available at www.iccsafe.org/public_safety.

LiUNA is the most progressive, aggressive and fastest-growing union of construction workers, and one of the most diverse and effective unions representing public service employees. The men and women of LiUNA do the hard, dangerous and sometimes dirty work of building our countries.

The [International Code Council](http://www.iccsafe.org) is a member-focused association. It is dedicated to developing model codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process to construct safe, sustainable, affordable and resilient structures. Most U.S. communities and many global markets [choose the International Codes](http://www.iccsafe.org).

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