



ICC NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
June 1, 2017
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Code Council's Swimming Pool Code Plays Key Role in Health and Safety Highlighted in Congressional Meeting

*10th Anniversary of Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act
Encourages Industry Awareness and Education*

As Memorial Day weekend marked the opening of many swimming pools across the United States, the [Association of Pool & Spa Professionals](#) (APSP) participated in a [hearing before the U.S. Senate Committee](#) on Commerce, Science & Transportation Subcommittee on Consumer Protection, Product Safety, Insurance and Data Security. The hearing was held in remembrance of the 10th anniversary of the [Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act](#) (VGB Act), and to call the public's attention to the importance of taking proactive safety measures in aquatic facilities. The VGB Act prevents both entrapment and eviscerations by swimming pool and spa drains and traditional forms of drowning in public swimming pools and spas.

In the hearing, APSP President and Chief Executive Officer Richard Gottwald discussed key aspects of the VGB Act and how APSP's relationship with the [International Code Council](#) (ICC) has improved residential and public pool safety through the [International Swimming Pool and Spa Code](#) (ISPSC).

The VGB Act resulted from the tragic death of former U.S. Secretary of State James Baker's granddaughter caused by drain entrapment. In the 10 years since the legislation was signed, the pool and spa industry, led by the APSP — the largest trade association representing the pool and spa supply chain — and the ICC — which develops model codes and standards used in the design, build and compliance process — have collaborated to work with industry and government to protect all pool and spa users.

Over the past decade, significant progress has been made to make new pools safe, according to Gottwald. In response to senators' questions on actions that can be taken to continue the momentum of safer pools, Gottwald encouraged the adoption of the ISPSC.

"We hope the subcommittee members will recognize and support statewide adoption of the ISPSC so as to protect our residential pool and spa users," Gottwald said. "It is important to note that the ISPSC not only addresses suction entrapment prevention in pools and spas, but also provides barrier protection requirements in order to reduce the risk of unattended access to the pool or spa. Providing these safety

requirements is of utmost importance and we continue to encourage each and every state to adopt this code."

The ISPSC is the first-ever, all-inclusive, comprehensive national model code for swimming pools and spas. In 2006, APSP finalized the ANSI/APSP-7 Standard for Suction Entrapment Avoidance in Swimming Pools, Wading Pools, Spas, Hot Tubs, and Catch Basins, which is consistent with all the provisions in the VGB Act. It protects against the three root causes of entrapments: suction, water velocity and mechanical binding. In 2009, this standard was accepted by ICC in the *International Building Code* and *International Residential Code*, and in 2012, it was included in the ISPSC.

"Through our collaboration with APSP, building and public health officials have an innovative, comprehensive residential and public pool code to ensure pools and spas are built safely," said International Code Council Chief Executive Officer Dominic Sims, CBO. "The ISPSC protects our children and families from accidents that can be prevented through the adoption of safety codes and standards."

The ISPSC is currently adopted as a mandatory code statewide in 11 states. In addition, the ISPSC is adopted as an optional code in 11 other states and is adopted in 73 local jurisdictions. For more information on the adoption of the ISPSC, [please click here](#).

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About the International Code Council

The [International Code Council](#) 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](#).

About the Association of Pool & Spa Professionals

The [Association of Pool & Spa Professionals](#) is the world's oldest and largest association representing swimming pool, hot tub, and spa manufacturers, distributors, manufacturers' agents, designers, builders, installers, suppliers, retailers, and service professionals. APSP is the only industry organization recognized by the American National Standards Institute to develop and promote national standards for pools, hot tubs and spas.