



Government of **Western Australia**  
Department of **Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety**  
**Building and Energy**



**Progress report**

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

**2018/19**

## **BUILDING COMMISSIONER'S FOREWORD**

I am pleased to present the second annual progress report on Local Government's Four Yearly Inspections of Private Swimming Pool Safety Barriers 2018/19. The report details individual local government's private swimming pool safety barrier inspection figures for the 2018/19 period, as voluntarily reported by those local governments.

Pools are part of the Western Australian lifestyle and are a great source of fun and entertainment. They are the perfect antidote to our long hot summers. However, drowning is a leading cause of accidental death for young children and private swimming pools particularly are one of the most likely locations of these drownings. Whilst the statistics on drowning deaths are particularly confronting, I become especially concerned when reading about the statistics of non-fatal drowning incidents.

While supervision is the best tool to prevent the drowning of young children, pool safety barriers play a significant part. The role of local governments in inspecting these safety barriers helps ensure that owners and occupiers of properties with pools are providing and maintaining compliant and effective safety barriers. This is an important task and I commend local governments in their actions to help prevent the tragic drowning of young children.

I would like to thank all local governments who reported their data to me by the deadline.

I am pleased that this report shows a significant reduction in the total number of overdue inspections from both the 2017/18 figures reported last year and the 2014/15 figures provided by the Ombudsman Western Australia (Ombudsman) in its report *Investigation into ways to prevent or reduce deaths of children by drowning* (Report). However, there remains plenty of room for improvement. 17 local governments were unable to provide their data and some local governments continue to have a significant number of overdue inspections. I am 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 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 requested to voluntarily provide data on their pool safety barrier inspection progress on three occasions:

- March 2019 email preliminary notification
- June 2019 letter formal request
- July 2019 reminder email

Of 139 local governments in Western Australia, 123 provided a response prior to preparation of this report. Unless otherwise noted, where a local governments data was not received it has been recorded in the report as 'Data not provided by deadline'.

This report is the second annual report on the progress of local government's pool inspection programs and is in response to recommendation 7 of the Ombudsman's Report, tabled in Parliament on 23 November 2017.

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

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

- a different understanding of the four year period;
- being unable to access particular properties; and
- staff resourcing.

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

## Progress report on local government's four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2018/19

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2018/19	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
City of Albany	125	73	0	0.0%
City of Armadale	5032	1762	0	0.0%
Shire of Ashburton	532	520	0	0.0%
Shire of Augusta-Margaret River	200	200	0	0.0%
Town of Bassendean	831	0	0	0.0%
City of Bayswater	2850	455	67	2.4%
City of Belmont	1251	368	0	0.0%
Shire of Beverley	26	2	0	0.0%
Shire of Boddington	50	13	1	2.0%
Shire of Boyup Brook	4	0	1	25.0%
Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes	46	12	0	0.0%
Shire of Brookton	17	4	0	0.0%
Shire of Broome	1553	368	399	25.7%
Shire of Broomehill-Tambellup	8	8	0	0.0%
Shire of Bruce Rock	8	8	0	0.0%
City of Bunbury	1607	407	0	0.0%
City of Busselton	1382	331	0	0.0%
Town of Cambridge	3393	693	0	0.0%
City of Canning	6342	2275	0	0.0%
Shire of Capel	985	786	0	0.0%
Shire of Carnamah	6	6	0	0.0%

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

## Progress report on local government's four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2018/19

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2018/19	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Carnarvon	116	12	29	25.0%
Shire of Chapman Valley	101	96	5	5.0%
Shire of Chittering	65	61	4	6.2%
Shire of Christmas Island	Data not provided by deadline			
Town of Claremont	814	258	0	0.0%
City of Cockburn	7329	1983	242	3.3%
Shire of Cocos (Keeling) Islands	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Collie	329	103	0	0.0%
Shire of Coolgardie	100	85	13	13.0%
Shire of Coorow	29	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Corrigin	16	16	0	0.0%
Town of Cottesloe	694	143	355	51.2%
Shire of Cranbrook	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Cuballing	16	16	0	0.0%
Shire of Cue	4	4	0	0.0%
Shire of Cunderdin	8	2	0	0.0%
Shire of Dalwallinu	17	14	3	17.6%
Shire of Dandaragan	45	1	0	0.0%
Shire of Dardanup	815	250	0	0.0%
Shire of Denmark	9	9	0	0.0%
Shire of Derby-West Kimberley	126	11	49	38.9%

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## Progress report on local government's four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2018/19

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2018/19	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Donnybrook-Balingup	175	6	68	38.9%
Shire of Dowerin	6	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Dumbleyung	12	10	0	0.0%
Shire of Dundas	6	0	0	0.0%
Town of East Fremantle	596	28	1	0.2%
Shire of East Pilbara	320	90	23	7.2%
Shire of Esperance	126	28	0	0.0%
Shire of Exmouth	118	28	0	0.0%
City of Fremantle	914	214	0	0.0%
Shire of Gingin	266	116	5	1.9%
Shire of Gnowangerup	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Goomalling	Data not provided by deadline			
City of Gosnells	7444	2236	79	1.1%
City of Greater Geraldton	1860	576	4	0.2%
Shire of Halls Creek	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Harvey	1473	403	0	0.0%
Shire of Irwin	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Jerramungup	0	0	0	N/A
City of Joondalup	22441	6513	6	0.0%
City of Kalamunda	5695	1266	5	0.1%
City of Kalgoorlie-Boulder	2292	352	713	31.1%

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## Progress report on local government's four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2018/19

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2018/19	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
City of Karratha	1699	586	7	0.4%
Shire of Katanning	104	42	20	19.2%
Shire of Kellerberrin	22	21	0	0.0%
Shire of Kent	6	6	0	0.0%
Shire of Kojonup	18	11	0	0.0%
Shire of Kondinin	6	1	1	16.7%
Shire of Koorda	14	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Kulin	8	0	0	0.0%
City of Kwinana	1714	407	6	0.4%
Shire of Lake Grace	9	9	0	0.0%
Shire of Laverton	2	2	0	0.0%
Shire of Leonora	6	6	0	0.0%
City of Mandurah	5100	1436	0	0.0%
Shire of Manjimup	131	18	0	0.0%
Shire of Meekatharra	2	2	0	0.0%
City of Melville	10264	2031	0	0.0%
Shire of Menzies	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Merredin	99	5	0	0.0%
Shire of Mingenew	26	26	0	0.0%
Shire of Moora	74	9	0	0.0%
Shire of Morawa	Data not provided by deadline			

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## Progress report on local government's four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2018/19

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2018/19	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Town of Mosman Park	846	436	0	0.0%
Shire of Mount Magnet	3	2	0	0.0%
Shire of Mount Marshall	6	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Mukinbudin	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Mundaring	3637	1264	0	0.0%
Shire of Murchison	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Murray	1108	9	2	0.2%
Shire of Nannup	13	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Narembeen	12	1	0	0.0%
Shire of Narrogin	127	127	0	0.0%
City of Nedlands	2766	939	0	8.3%
Shire of Ngaanyatjaraku	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Northam	507	135	2	0.4%
Shire of Northampton	156	3	53	34.0%
Shire of Nungarin	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Peppermint Grove	Advised they were unable to provide the data			
Shire of Perenjori	Data not provided by deadline			
City of Perth	99	5	0	0.0%
Shire of Pingelly	32	13	0	0.0%
Shire of Plantagenet	17	0	0	0.0%
Town of Port Hedland	850	244	113	13.3%

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## Progress report on local government's four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2018/19

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2018/19	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Quairading	52	15	0	0.0%
Shire of Ravensthorpe	Data not provided by deadline			
City of Rockingham	9923	3275	1	0.0%
Shire of Sandstone	10	4	0	0.0%
Shire of Serpentine-Jarrahdale	1933	1012	10	0.5%
Shire of Shark Bay	5	0	0	0.0%
City of South Perth	2742	758	151	5.5%
City of Stirling	12309	3805	0	0.0%
City of Subiaco	734	192	0	0.0%
City of Swan	7984	1666	28	0.4%
Shire of Tammin	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Three Springs	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Toodyay	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Trayning	3	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Upper Gascoyne	2	0	0	0.0%
Town of Victoria Park	903	750	7	0.8%
Shire of Victoria Plains	7	6	0	
City of Vincent	923	340	15	1.6%
Shire of Wagin	70	4	0	0.0%
Shire of Wandering	17	16	0	0.0%
City of Wanneroo	13689	4134	0	0.0%

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## Progress report on local government's four yearly inspections of private swimming pool safety barriers 2018/19

Local government	Total no. pools	Inspected in 2018/19	Overdue	Overdue Percentage
Shire of Waroona	175	53	26	14.9%
Shire of West Arthur	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Westonia	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Wickepin	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Williams	30	0	0	0.0%
Shire of Wiluna	1	1	0	0.0%
Shire of Wongan-Ballidu	Data not provided by deadline			
Shire of Woodanilling	5	0	5	100.0%
Shire of Wyalkatchem	9	1	1	11.1%
Shire of Wyndham-East Kimberley	304	47	22	7.2%
Shire of Yalgoo	0	0	0	N/A
Shire of Yilgarn	22	1	3	13.6%
Shire of York	Data not provided by deadline			
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>161960</b>	<b>47097</b>	<b>2545</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

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