

Garage

- Do not store chemicals or solvents and fuels in soft drink containers.

Rainwater tanks

- How stable is the support base? Timber stands can rot.
- Is there a child-proof cover to the top of the rainwater tank?

House Perimeters

- Houses are still required to have earthing of electrical services and there is more use of plastic water plumbing and drainage.
- This can cause fatalities if older parts of the building are using metallic water piping for earthing of electrical services.
- Don't let children play with earthing wires or spikes on the perimeter of the building.
- Always check to see whether an earthing wire is attached to any old plumbing before cutting and installing any new pipe work.
- Always clear the sedimentation pressure release valve monthly on a hot water system. As sediment builds up, the hot water unit can explode.
- There should always be 1m of metallic piping either side of a hot water system. Plastic will melt.
- Termite chemical sprays often extend one metre out from external building walls. External paths generally cover any chemical over spray.
- Don't plant salad crops or root crops (which are subsequently consumed) in gardens adjacent to the wall areas where there may be chemical over spray.

- Lead based paints were used in most paints up to 1970. Lead based paints could be an environmental hazard to children if flaking and left upon the ground. Lead is an accumulative element to the body that is not easily discarded or digested out of the body.
- Keep stock and vehicles off the septic tank disposal area. The compaction will collapse the trenching.

Water storage

- In rural or semi-rural situations, dams can be a hazard.
- Snakes can be attracted to external water sources.
- Mosquitoes can also be a vector source attracted to stagnant water which can convey vector spread illnesses of Ross River Fever which is usually irretrievable in effect.

Further information

There are many "kid safe" programmes that have been developed and if you need further information, look up the website on www.kidsafe.com.au.

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Child Safety in Building Design

Pre-planning in Design

Pre-planning for design issues can avoid accidents and tragedies that in hindsight could have been avoided. This brochure outlines some practical matters to be considered in using your house and a property before it is built.

Fences and driveways

- Are there blind spots if you are reversing?
- Are the fence heights and the location of the driveway giving you good vision or could it be further offset away from shrubs, street trees and fence lines?
- Are the transition grades from the road, footpath and garage too steep?
- Is your vision obscured by trees and other grade obstructions?

Verandahs, front doors and picture windows

- Have you got balconies, hand rails and balusters to prevent a child from falling over the edge or through the railing?
- Baluster spacings and bottom rails should prevent a 125mm sphere or child from falling.
- Are there glazed panels beside the front door extending to the verandah or floor level?
- Have you used laminated or safety glass for these openings?
- For full picture windows and sliding doors are there safety rails or motifs to indicate that the window is in a closed position?

Family and dining

- Good visibility from the kitchen assists with supervision.
- Low level storage for books and toys, high level storage for alcohol and breakables.
- Table and bench corners less than 900mm high are chamfered or cushioned.

Kitchen

- Power outlets located close to benches and well away from sinks and taps.
- Bench corners less than 900mm high should be chamfered or cushioned.
- Child proof latches on cupboards and drawers.
- Installation of stove guards to front and sides of the stove.

Bedrooms

- Have you enough electrical power points, or are you going to use power boards or double adaptors which overload and can cause fires?
- Are there permanently wired smoke detectors to the bedrooms or hallways?
- Do you have exposed heating appliances in the bedrooms?

Bathroom

- Tempering valves on hot water systems to ensure a maximum of 50° Celsius water temperature is not exceeded (desirable to have a lower temperature of 38° Celsius for children).
- Bath tap covers/caps to make turning taps difficult on hot water systems.
- Dedicated medicine cabinet that is child proof.
- Wash basins should not overhang the bath.
- Shower screen made of laminated/safety glass.
- Emergency releases on bathroom and toilet door locks.
- Towel rails strong enough to support the weight of a couple of children.
- Avoid ceramic soap holders or ones with sharp edges.
- Safety switches on appliances.
- Electrical outlets well clear of potential splash zones or for electrical appliances not to fall into water.

Laundry

- Wall mounted ironing board.
- Hanging space for bucket storage out of harms reach of children.
- Lockable cabinets for poisons, chemicals and cleaning agents storage.
- Washing machine discharge plumbed to bypass laundry tub.

Children's rooms

- Adequate toy storage.
- No cords on blinds or curtains.
- Don't place cots near blinds or curtains that have cords.
- Soft impact absorbing floor coverings.

Swimming Pools

- A proper child-proof self-enclosing swimming pool fence with a gate that opens outwards with a self-closing hinge and latches that are above children's reach.
- No natural toe holds or rungs in safety fencing where a child could pull themselves over.
- Children's safety guards to return vacuum suction pits.
- Don't let children mix dry chlorine powder and water.
- Do not store dry chlorine anywhere near lawn mower fuels. An explosion can occur.
- Do not store chlorine where it is exposed to high temperatures or sunlight. It can cause an explosion or fire.