

To a small child, an uncovered skimmer box looks like a potty or seat

But if a child sits in it, the immense suction of the pool's filter pump forms an instant seal between your child and the edge of the skimmer box causing severe, and sometimes fatal, injuries

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skimmer boxes

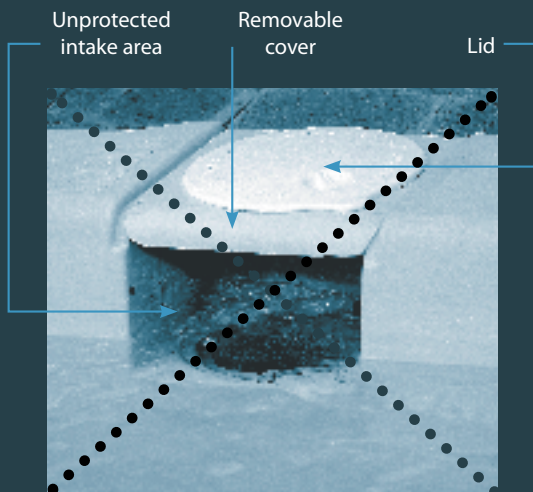
SAFETY FOR KIDS
*in the home 



✓ Safe skimmer box



✗ Unsafe skimmer box



Skimmer boxes

Skimmer boxes –
the hidden backyard killers

In the past children have received fatal or serious injuries as a result of sitting in a pool's skimmer box.

Skimmer boxes can often be found at the side of swimming pools or spas and may look like a potty or seat to a small child. They are designed to help remove material, including leaves and dirt, from the water.

Uncovered skimmer boxes are a safety hazard for small children.

If a child sits in an uncovered skimmer box, the immense suction of the pool's filter pump forms an instant seal between a child's bottom and the edge of the skimmer box resulting in horrific, and sometimes fatal, injuries.

In October 1988, the Commissioner for Fair Trading introduced a Product Safety Order to ensure that all newly installed pools and spas have safe skimmer boxes. However, skimmer boxes installed prior to 1988 may be unsafe.

Secondhand fibreglass pools moved from an old to a new location could also be unsafe if they were manufactured prior to 1988.

How can you tell if your skimmer box is safe?

If your pool or spa was installed after October 1988, you should have one of the new style, safe skimmer boxes.

They have a permanently fastened cover and a safety skirt so a child can't sit in the box.

However, if your pool is old or second hand, there is a risk that the pool in your backyard is a potential killer.

Older-style skimmer boxes installed prior to October 1988 should be fitted with an approved safety device.

How can you make sure your skimmer box is safe?

If you think your skimmer box is unsafe, take the following action immediately:

- buy a low cost conversion kit, which is available from local swimming pool suppliers; or
- place a bar or other fitting over the skimmer box to prevent children from sitting in the box; or
- permanently fix the cover over the skimmer box so it can only be removed using a tool.