

Summer is upon us: Is your swimming pool safe?

Before jumping in, consider potential electrical hazards

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Summer is almost here, and that means spending more time outdoors. To cool down, many take a dip in a pool. Or to relax in the evening, a hot tub provides a nice way to soothe aching muscles.

One aspect of owning a pool or hot tub that can be overlooked is its [electrical system](#), which can pose a significant or even deadly hazard. Since pool and hot tub areas mean wet skin and wet surfaces, the chance of electrocution increases when electricity is present.

Electricity around pools, hot tubs and spas can be found in underwater lights, electric pool equipment (e.g., pumps, filters, vacuum), extension and power cords, electrical outlets or switches, electrical devices such as TVs and overhead power lines.

"To keep swimmers and hot tubbers as safe as possible, be sure to have the electrical system inspected, repaired and upgraded to local and National Electrical Code by a licensed contractor," says Erin Hollinshead, executive director of [Safe Electricity](#). "Also, do not set up a pool (temporary or permanent) where power lines are overhead or within 25 feet of the water."

Electrical safety also includes the following, according to Safe Electricity and the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC):

- Making sure ground-fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) are installed in all required places.
- Testing permanently installed GFCIs monthly. Test those that are portable or connected to a cord before each use.
- Looking for signs of mold or other growth on the inside lenses of lights, which can indicate





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water leakage.

- Ensuring that the power switch and GFCI for underwater lights are clearly marked and easily accessible in an emergency.
- Labeling power switches for pool, hot tub and spa equipment, as well as lighting.
- Using battery-operated electronics whenever possible.
- Ensuring that hands and feet are dry while using electrical devices.
- Keeping long-handled tools and poles away from nearby power lines, including the drop-down lines to the home.
- Holding pool skimmers and other long-handled tools as low as possible to the ground.

- Keeping electrical cords, wires and devices out of reach and at least 5 feet from the water.
- Unplugging a device that has fallen into the water before touching it. Even submersible pumps designed to run under water may not be safe to use when someone is in the water.

Signs of shock or faulty wiring

Swimmers may feel a tingling sensation, experience muscle cramps or may not be able to move. Individuals can display panic behaviors or appear as a motionless swimmer in the water. If there is an electrical issue, underwater lights can flicker, dim, or show other signs they are not working properly. People may complain of tingling or other odd sensations.

If you suspect you are being shocked while in the water, move away from the source of the shock and get out of the water. If possible, exit without using a metal ladder; touching metal may increase the risk of shock.

If you think someone in the water is experiencing an electrical shock, immediately turn off all power. If the power is not turned off, rescuers can also be shocked or electrocuted. After the power is disconnected, call 9-1-1, or have someone else make the call.

For more about electrical safety, visit [SafeElectricity.org](https://www.safeelectricity.org).

Safe Electricity is the award-winning, public awareness program of the Energy Education Council, a 501(c) 3 established in 1952 on the campus of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. With offices located in Springfield, Ill., Safe Electricity operates under the University of Illinois Extension and is led by the EEC Board of Directors. Since the Safe Electricity program was created in 2001, it has provided thousands of safety-minded resources to its more than 500 utility members from across the country to help save lives and reduce injuries.

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