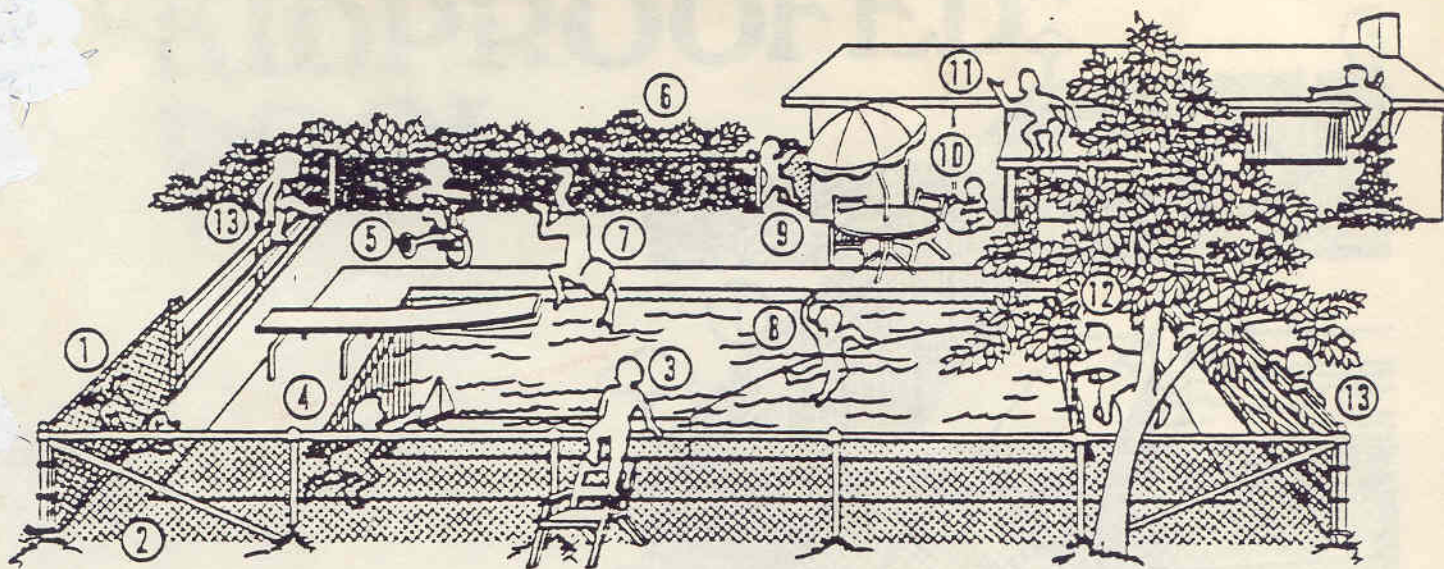


"KIDPROOFING" the backyard pool



■SUMMERTIME'S old swimming hole has moved from a shady brook to the backyard, where it is still as great a lure to youngsters—and a worry to parents. To make sure you know the most common hazards which you should help your youngster to avoid—whether around your own or your neighbor's pool—see how many of the numbered errors here you can identify before reading the corresponding paragraphs below. Summer swimming fun need not turn into tragedy; turn the page to see the same pool made more "kidproof."

1. Even if the fence meets the ground, a dog or youngster may be able to dig a hole that will permit a toddler to crawl underneath and into the pool area. Most home-pool drownings happen to children under five, with the peak for toddlers of age two.

2. Framing or bracing on the outside makes it easy for a youngster to climb a fence. External surfaces made of smooth or vertical segments, or close-mesh fencing will minimize footholds and handholds.

3. Lawn furniture or other objects next to the outside of a fence may be used by a child to get over the top. Also this fence is not high enough.

4. Unsupervised play—even temporary—invites slips or falls into the water and is dangerous. Children playing with boats or trying to retrieve objects may topple in.

5. A child on a tricycle or wagon or other wheeled vehicle can easily roll over the pool edge into the water.

6. Dangerous also are high hedges or other obstructions which block off a view of the pool. Fences and barriers with periodic narrow gaps, portholes, or clear panels permit parents, neighbors, even passers-by to spot trespassers or bathers in difficulty.

7. This pool appears too small for a diving board, a fact which may result in serious injuries to divers.

8. If this short pool is deep enough for a diving board, it is likely that the slope from the shallow end is too great as shown by the young wader who has slipped down the steep incline into water over his head.

9. An unlocked gate is a temptation to children and is related to many drownings. If anything happens, even to a trespasser, the owner may be judged liable.

10. A building wall used as part of a pool enclosure can cause danger, especially if a child can open a door or climb through a window into the pool area.

11. A low overhanging roof can enable an agile youngster to drop into the pool enclosure.

12. Tree limbs can provide entry to uninvited guests of any age.

13. No wall or fence should provide handholds or footholds. In one case, a two-year-old drowned the second time he scaled a six-foot basket-weave fence. Open horizontal board fencing also is simple to climb. A seven-year-old boy drowned after climbing a six-foot chain-link fence.