



13506 Summerport Village Parkway #810  
Windermere, FL 34786

(407) 938-9336 (V)  
(866) 594-7824 (F)

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**INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**

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**TO:** ALL CLIENTS  
**FROM:** WESS LONG  
**SUBJECT:** PREVENTING INCIDENTS OF GUEST ENTRAPMENT  
**DATE:** 4/26/18  
**CC:** SGE CLIENT PARTNERS

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There was an [NBC Today story](#) this morning covering an incident in North Myrtle Beach, SC when a child became entrapped in a pool suction line. Your facility may receive questions as a result of this event including, "Could this happen at your facility?" While this type of incident does not impact lifeguarding training, we feel it is important to educate our clients on this important topic.

Our impression from the video is that a grate was not properly secured, and the boy removed the grate and became entrapped in the suction (return) pipe. There are supposed to be additional safety measures that comply with the **Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act** on pool facilities including a requirement for multiple suction (return) points in the pool to prevent entrapment. There are other specific requirements of compliance if the pool has a single source of suction. All pool facilities should have a comprehensive list of grates (pool and spa), install dates, VGB certifications, and expiration dates for each grate. If you are unsure of your facility's design or safety features, please contact a local pool contractor to do an inspection.

**Steps to prevent entrapment:**

- Grates need to be inspected by a properly trained staff member
- If a grate is not secure, it should be repaired immediately before guests are allowed back in the pool
- Train staff on the federal law for VGB <https://www.poolsafely.gov/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/pssa.pdf>
- Have a list of all grate (pool and spa) install dates, VGB certifications, and expiration dates for each grate

**If an entrapment incident occurs**

- Turn off power to the pump as quickly as possible
- Activate your EAP
- Provide emergency care to the guests as quickly as possible, and continue until handed over to EMS

