



## Pre-Contract Consumer Information

### THANK YOU

for considering a SPASA Queensland Member for the Construction, Installation or Renovation of your Swimming Spa/Pool.

Any Building process can be quite unpredictable and hectic at times (particularly in an occupied residential environment). In an endeavour to make the process a little more informative (and less stressful), the Association has prepared this guide to give you (the Customer) some information on the building processes usually involved, together with the important procedures, timetables and obligations involved in the Contract, and the Construction process.

**Construction Sites are dangerous places**, and your backyard will become a “building construction site” subject to several mandatory safety rules and regulations, so please ensure that all children, family and visitors are discouraged from entering the construction site, or, from removing or interfering with any of the mandatory “Danger” signs or safety barricades.

So that the Contractor can accurately prepare plans, schedules, specifications and costings for your Contract, you will need to make some enquiries and arrange to have information (in advance) for the Contractor, regarding, any:

- Water Restrictions,
- Soil Test,
- Contour Survey,
- Foundation Designs,
- Engineering Designs,
- Drainage Designs,
- Boundary Survey,
- Fire Ant Survey,
- Termite Barriers designs, or
- anything else (Koala corridors)

that may have an effect on Swimming Pool Construction/Installation at your proposed pool site.

*\*Better to know “up-front” of any condition that may affect the contract completion date or cost, rather than be “surprised” on the way through.*

*\*If you are not sure, discuss these things with your Contractor (who can arrange them for you, if required).*

Your Contractor will advise you if a Soil Test is necessary to determine the soil structure under the ground, to determine if any additional work needs to be done to ensure your completed project is structurally sound for years to come.

Soil Test and Contour Survey Information will also indicate if any additional preparatory or engineering work needs to be done, which can then be costed and built into the Contract Price and Schedules, or estimated in the Provisional Amounts section of the contract.

During the course of construction, your Contractor will not be on your site every day, and any movement of the safety barricades or safety signs that occur will effect the safety of the whole site. Please monitor these things each day.

The excavation or the pool shell will catch rain and collect run off water which can pose another safety concern, and (*in the absence of your Contractor*) you must keep the excavation or pool shell free of water, as well maintain the safety barricades and signs on the site.

Please ensure that you discuss with your Contractor the arrangement for suitable all weather access to the actual site of your proposed pool (for the building work to be done), and for, the delivery/removal of construction materials and equipment.

*\*(This may involve access through the neighbouring property, removal of fences, plants, trees, retaining walls etc).*

On receipt of the correct deposit amount, your Contractor (on your behalf as the Land Owner) will submit the appropriate plans and paperwork to obtain the required Building Approval (usually through a Private Certifier who is acting on behalf of the Local Council).

Your Contractor will arrange for, or advise you of, any other Reports or Surveys that need to be done for the submission of the Building Approval of the proposed pool at your site.

The Private Certifier will post a copy of the Building Approval given directly to you (as the Land Owner), once all of the conditions and requirements have been met. Check with your Contractor when you receive your copy, to ensure that he also has received a copy, together with any Soil Test or Survey Reports as may be required.

Usually, Building Approvals will take the form of a “generic engineering plan” stamped as approved by the Certifier.

*\*Although this is the plan approved by the Certifier for Building Approval purposes, it may not necessarily be exactly the same as the drawing of the site Plan & Section of the Pool/Spa, as agreed and shown in (or attached to) the Contract itself.*

The actual building work will always be done in accordance with the Contract (Schedules and Plans), as signed and agreed to (which may be amended during the course of construction, by a Contract Variation as agreed and signed by both Parties).

Sometimes, due to Council or other Authority requirements, the agreed Plan in the Contract may need to be amended to suit underground services, easements, koala corridors or other considerations (as directed and required by the Building Approval).



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As soon as you become aware of any “special condition” or “required amendment” of this nature you must advise your Contractor immediately, so that you and your Contractor can discuss, revise and re-organise a Contract Variation that may be required to the Contract to meet these changes.

To arrange a Commencement Date for the building work to start on your site, your Contractor will normally make contact with you (within 14 business days) following receipt of advice of the Building Approval.

*\*Building Approval can take up to 6 weeks to process (depending on Engineering or other Certifier’s requirements to meet approval), and unfortunately this process is not under the control of your Contractor who is only acting as your agent for this purpose.*

To assist in the continuity of the contracted works, you must follow your Contractor’s instructions & directions, and:

- comply with the requirements of any Water Restrictions or Fire Ant requirements applicable to your site
- confirm in a timely manner, your choice of Coping Materials, Waterline Tiles, or internal colours, as required
- organise in a timely manner, for the erection of a permanent Swimming Pool Fence, and its Certification, as required
- obtain a Manufacturers Certificate from the fencing contractor erecting the permanent Swimming Pool Fence (on or prior to its installation), as this will be required when requesting a “Certificate of Compliance” from the Certifier or Swimming Pool Fence Inspector
- obtain a “Certificate of Compliance” in respect to the Swimming Pool Fence from the Certifier or Inspector immediately your permanent Swimming Pool Fence is completed

Your Contractor will not be able to arrange for the placement of the internal lining, or to fill the pool works with water until the Pool Fence has been certified as compliant. On your receipt of the “Certificate of Compliance” of the Swimming Pool Fence, provide your Contractor with a copy of the “Certificate of Compliance” issued, and notify the temporary construction fence hirer to now collect their fence.

Your Contractor will always endeavour to keep you informed of the progress at each stage of the proposed works, but in most cases they can only give approximate dates as they rely on industry sub-contractors who may be on several jobs at once, and who can be delayed by weather, mechanical failure, illness, accidents or other unforeseeable problems (that your Contractor may not be made aware of). Similarly, the delivery of materials or equipment is by others, and again your Contractor may not be aware of the actual delivery schedules by these suppliers, in your area.

Other than for the initial “Mark Out” (or for security/access reasons) it is not necessary for you to be in attendance at the site all the time. As long as your Contractor has access to the site, electric power and water the contracted work can progress.

There will be many sub-contractors delivering materials or equipment or working on the site, and if it rains, or the access or site itself becomes boggy – the work will be delayed by your Contractor until the site conditions become suitable to continue work as this will minimise any unnecessary collateral damage to your site or property, and will save you further expenses.

One of the biggest and unknown costs in Swimming Pool construction/installation is the hourly rate of cartage of any excavated materials being taken away from the site, together with the tip fees and levies.

These costs, fees & levies vary on a day-to-day basis for all sub-contractors. Depending on the weather, the traffic conditions, the road conditions, the availability of a “tip site” (at the same time as the dig), will vary these expenses, and once committed to – the process can’t be stopped.

“Tip-sites” will only accept their definition of “clean fill”, and will charge a fee per M<sup>3</sup> through the gate, together with any “Waste Levy” imposed by the Government (which can vary from \$35 to \$120 a tonne on top of the Tip Operators fees).

Therefore,

**if you can source a local “Site to Tip” close to your place, in advance, you can save big dollars in otherwise unnecessary, additional machine time and cartage costs and tip fees & levies.**

- You usually have better local knowledge of, and contacts in your own neighbourhood through Schools, Sporting Clubs, or Friends, Family, Neighbours etc who may need some fill.
- Also consider any future landscaping you may want to do, as the excavated soil can be stockpiled on-site for your future use, rather than you paying to have it removed, and then, having to purchase new soil later.
- Check the free websites e.g. [www.soilswap.com.au](http://www.soilswap.com.au) or similar.

### **Important Note**

- *If you do require your Contractor to remove or re-locate your excavated materials, please understand that your Contractor is unable to give you a definite “fixed cost” for this service in advance, but, will provide an estimate or “Provisional Amount” in the Contract for you (based on his experience of recent costs in your area). This estimate will then be adjusted after the work has been done, and the actual costs and levies known.*



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**Construction timetables vary from Builder to Builder**, but the process generally follows the following pattern:

- ❖ Your Contractor will contact you after the Contractor has received a copy of the Building Approval, to arrange a day/time to meet with you at your site to “mark out” the position of the pool, and to commence the site-cut or excavation work.

**Note:** *it is very important that you attend this on-site “mark out”, to confirm:*

- *the nominated “Datum” or fixed reference point and the desired height of the finished pool in relation to that “Datum”*
- *the arrangements for the disposal of excavated materials*
- *your preferred pool position (in relation to other structures)*
- *the shape, the internal and external lengths, widths and depths,*
- *the coping colour, shape and size,*
- *the number of inlets, outlets, skimmers or drains required*
- *the location and capacity of pumps, filters, heaters, and backwash point etc*
- *accessories (lights, cleaners, ladders, handrails etc),*
- *the location of skip bin and site for slurry, and*
- *any other little adjustments that may need to be made.*

*\*This is also an opportunity for a “re-think” about where the pool should be, its relationship to other parts of the house or yard, future works, and, there may also be some minor changes required by your Contractor, or the Building Approval.*

*\*On paper it may all look good, and it may all seem to be OK, but there will always be some last minute changes and confirmations required once you and your Contractor are on-site.*

*\*Prior to the excavation being commenced (even if there is no cost involved), this site meeting is also the last chance you have to change the agreed structural shell or location of the contracted works (before the Work starts), as any future changes may incur an additional cost for such changes, and, will be subject to a written Contract Variation to be agreed between the parties.*

- ❖ Work is commenced with an excavation, followed by the installation of the structural shell (either, an on-site steel fabrication and concrete spray, or, the placement of a pre-fabricated shell).

A pre-fabricated shell will take between 2 and 4 days to install, whereas a concrete shell will take between 2 and 4 weeks to construct and cure.

When first sprayed, a concrete shell must be left to cure (your Contractor will advise on how long) before any further work can be done with it, and for the first three (3) days of the curing period you should hose the shell twice a day (using a rose spray) to assist in the curing process. A pre-fabricated shell is already cured (prior to delivery).

This is a good time for you to check up on your arrangements for your fencing and electrical requirements.

*\*By this time, you should have already chosen the coping, tiles or other materials, organised a Pool Fencing Contractor and Electrical Contractor (as required), and advised your Contractor of their details or their schedules.*

*Do not leave these items to the last minute – as Suppliers and your other contractors may require up to 3 weeks lead time.*

*Please ensure you have chosen and advised the Contractor of the size of your coping before the shell is sprayed.*

During the curing period, deliveries of materials and equipment will be made to your Site, ready for the next stages.

- ❖ The Contractor’s pool plumber and coping installer will soon be on site, and at this stage you should organise for an Electrician to connect the “earth wire” from the point provided on the pool shell to a suitable earth point, and, to hook up the electrical equipment (lights, filter, pump, chlorinator etc).

Immediately upon the erection of the permanent Swimming Pool Fence, you must obtain the Fence Manufacturer’s Certificate, and arrange for the Certifier as shown on the Building Approval (or, a Swimming Pool Fence Inspector) to conduct an inspection and issue a “Certification” that the Swimming Pool Fence complies with the Legislation.

Please ensure that you give a copy of this Certification to your Contractor as soon as possible.

*Complete information on Swimming Pool Fencing requirements in Queensland can be found on the web at:  
[www.poolfencing.qld.gov.au](http://www.poolfencing.qld.gov.au)*



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The pool building works cannot be filled with water until a Swimming Pool Fence Certification of Compliance is issued.

For a pre-fabricated pool installation,

this means the Certificate should be obtained as the pool shell is actually being placed.

For a concrete pool

it means the Certificate is required before the internal lining can be installed (as it is designed to “cure” underwater).

- ❖ Following the receipt of the Fence Certification, the structural shell of a Concrete Pool can now be prepared (and may need to be acid washed), and the internal lining installed. It can then be filled with suitable water.

Once the Pool is filled with water, and a settling in period allowed for, the Contractor will chemically balance the water, test the operation of the pool equip, and conduct a “Handover” with you.

He will then issue a “Certificate of Practical Completion” when the building work required under the contract has been completed, and the pool/spa is deemed suitable for the purpose.

### *Important Note*

Where the contracted building work flow will be “Interrupted”

*(i.e. the shell is placed, and then work is suspended with the pool is to be finished at a later date – e.g. while the residence is built)*

please ensure that you and your Contractor clearly discuss and document at what Stage the building work will be suspended, and when you would expect building work to be re-commenced.

Naturally, any increases in the cost (that occur during the interrupted period) to complete the work will be passed on.

Your Contractor will rely on your written advice of a re-commencement date to re-schedule sub-contractors and suppliers.

Please give plenty of notice to the Contractor for your proposed re-commencement date.