



CONNECTICUT SPA & POOL ASSOCIATION

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Representative Shapiro, Senator Colapietro and Members of the General Law Committee,

I am Rob Romano. I am not only a swimming pool builder; I am also the current Past President CONSPA and the Vice President of the Northeast Spa and Pool Association. It's the parent association of the northeast chapters that cover not only CT but parts of New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. I served my two year term for CONSPA from the fall of 2007 to the fall of 2009. I am here today to support HB 5230, AAC Licensing of Swimming Pool Installers.

I am here today because there is a real need for oversight and standards in the pool building industry. As I mentioned, in recent years there have been some high profile instances of people becoming entrapped. I became President of the chapter only 2 months after the tragic death of a 6 year old boy in Greenwich CT, an accident that may have been avoided had everyone been educated and brought up to date on the current code. In Sept of 2004 the 2003 IRC Appendix G code went into effect in our state. The pool where the accident happened was constructed the following summer in 2005. It was built, inspected and received a c/o. Then 2 years later the suction entrapment occurred. Without going into details of the accident we feel it could have been avoided if the builder was educated by being brought up on the current code.

The key word here is EDUCATION. Being a licensed builder is one thing, the education afforded to the license is priceless. Our chapter led the way in educating not only our members of the CT chapter but the building inspectors as well. The whole appendix g section of the code is a page 1 ½. The entrapment section of the code we currently use is only a 1/2 page long but that page holds vital information on how to properly pipe a pool so it does not become an potential trap for swimmers. It's amazing how many builders in our state still do not understand this code. We have an opportunity here to help not only the builders but the building officials as well. We are the experts in out in the field. To instill this license and force continuing education will force the builders who don't know to know. Not just pool builders are building these pools. You have landscapers, mason and home builders who do not understand how to properly

pipe or even what a split main suction outlet is or an SVRS. Continuing education will teach them what it is.

CT is in a unique situation in our region. We are currently the only state to hold a service license to work on swimming pools. To obtain this license one has to go through years of training that includes both classroom and field training. The irony is a service company has to have a licensed tech on staff to work on a swimming pool that has been constructed by a company who only has a home improvement contactors registration. What this means is, the builder who is constructing a new swimming pool may not be trained and educated to know the most current standards and codes. The service tech knows more than the builder when they really should be on the same level.

We have a program in place through the Association of Pool and Spa professionals to help train new swimming pool builders how to properly construct a swimming pool. This training is vital to the safe construction of the pool as it follows the current codes and standards on CT's books today. In the end, it is the consumer who benefits the most from this license. They will have the peace of mind knowing that the professional pool builder is knowledgeable in his trade and will construct a pool that is safe for their children and guests. I support HB 5230, AAC Licensing of Swimming Pool Installers and ask that you do to.

Thank you.