



Connecticut Department of Public Health

**Testimony Presented Before the Public Safety and Security
Committee**

March 1, 2016

**Commissioner Raul Pino, M.D., M.P.H.
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Senate Bill 240 – AN ACT CONCERNING PUBLIC SAFETY.

The Department of Public Health (DPH) opposes this bill and provides the following information. Senate Bill 240 would remove the mandate for a fence around a splash pad or spray park.

The definition of “public pool”, as found in Section 19a-36(c) of the Connecticut General Statutes, specifically classifies splash pads and spray parks, where water is recirculated, as “special purpose public pools.” In accordance with Section 19-13-B33b(b)(1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, all public pools are required to be constructed or substantially altered or reconstructed in accordance with the most recent edition of the Connecticut Public Swimming Pool Design Guide. Section 17.3 of the Connecticut Public Swimming Pool Design Guide states that “all outdoor pools shall be protected by a fence, wall, or other barrier, or any combination thereof” and requires that such an enclosure be at minimum 4 feet in height and enclose the entire pool area.

This requirement is based upon the need to protect public safety and health. The fence serves as a barrier that helps to prevent unauthorized access to the splash pad or spray park, particularly by children who may be unsupervised. Further, it prevents animals from entering the public pool area, which helps to reduce the introduction of giardia, cryptosporidium and other parasites into the pool water or on other surfaces within the area. In combination with the requirement for shower facilities that must be used by pool patrons, the fence serves to reduce the potential for recreational waterborne illnesses.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has indicated that “in the past two decades, there has been a substantial increase in the number of recreational water illness outbreaks associated with swimming.” It should be noted that Connecticut has not had any recent documented recreational water illnesses associate with its public splash pads or spray parks. The Department’s requirement that a fence be constructed to protect splash pads and splash parks is an appropriate public health and safety safeguard.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

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