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**Helping
Queenslanders
Build Better**

fact: n. 1. an event or thing known to have
occurred. 2. a truth revealed. 3. a piece of
information. *get me all the facts of this case.*

FACT SHEET

SWIMMING POOLS

This fact sheet contains information about selecting a pool type and pool builder, as well as the contract and construction process.

Types of pools

The types of domestic swimming pools available include sprayed-on reinforced concrete, cast-in-situ reinforced concrete, reinforced concrete block, and fibreglass or pre-fabricated pools. A range of finishes and liners is available for the different types of pools.

Pools may be located either totally in the ground, totally above ground or partially above ground. The final choice of the design, shape, and supporting filtration equipment will depend on site conditions, cost and personal preference.

Selecting a Pool Builder

Discuss with friends or relatives who own pools their experiences involving colour, size, location, equipment, finishes, landscaping, time taken to build, maintenance requirements and any problems they have encountered during or after the construction of the pool.

Make arrangements with several BSA-licensed pool builders to inspect your chosen site and provide written quotations and details of their warranties. When arranging quotes, ask the pool builders for contact details of at least three past clients so that you can confirm their past work and performance.

The Quote

Fully discuss with the pool builders your requirements in relation to:

- Shape, location on site, interior lining, size and depth of the pool;
- The number and type of inlets, skimmer boxes and drains required;
- The filtration equipment required - its type, capacity and positioning; and
- Accessories such as underwater lights, cleaners, ladders and handrails.

Also, discuss the builder's responsibilities and exactly what work can be included, such as pool surrounds and landscaping.

NOTE: It is important that before you accept a quote or sign a contract you check with BSA to ensure that the pool builder you have chosen is currently licensed.

The Contract

A range of contracts can be used for swimming pool construction (e.g. the Swimming Pool and Spa Association, SPASA, provide contract documentation specifically tailored for this purpose).

All domestic pool contracts for work valued at more than \$3,300 must comply with the *Domestic Building Contracts Act 2000* (DBCAs). Key provisions include a 5 business-day "cooling-off" period and the requirement for the contractor to provide the homeowner with a written contract and a BSA-approved Contract Information Statement.

The Act also requires that the deposit must not exceed 10% for work up to \$20,000 in value, or 5% for projects over \$20,000. Whichever contract you use it is very important that you read it carefully and seek legal advice about any concerns you may have **before** signing, to ensure that the documentation is fair and fully complies with current legislation.

Make sure that your contract documentation is supported by appropriate drawings and specifications and fully details all aspects of your pool including the physical dimensions, the shape, size, water depth, interior finish, type of filtration, and access, in addition to clearly identifying the amount and timing of progress payments.

Check what provision the contract makes for unforeseen events such as encountering rock in the course of excavation and wet weather. You should also obtain in writing any details concerning warranties on the pool and the associated equipment.

Sewerage and Water Supply Approval

Approval from local government is required in sewerred areas, and in most cases your pool builder will arrange this.

Building Approval

Swimming pools require building approval. After entering into a contract to build your pool, your pool builder will draw up plans and specifications for your approval and subsequent submission to your local government or a private certifier and, where applicable, statutory authorities. After all necessary approvals have been granted the pool builder may then proceed to commence work.

Structural Stability

Prior to granting approval, your local government or private certifier will require sufficient information from the pool builder to ensure that the pool, when constructed, will be structurally sound and meet normal engineering criteria. For difficult sites, structural advice may be required from a suitably qualified engineer

Fencing

Under Queensland legislation it is compulsory to fence your pool according to specific requirements. Your local government or private certifier may specify what fencing system will be necessary to meet these requirements. (Only your local government can grant exemptions to these requirements.)

If your local government doesn't have any specific statement regarding fencing, you should still make enquiries with them to ensure you are fencing your pool correctly.

The Final Step

When the pool is completed, a detailed and comprehensive 'handover' by the builder is essential. It is most important that all persons who will be responsible for your pool's care and maintenance make themselves available for detailed tuition in: (a) water sanitisation; (b) the operation and maintenance of filtration equipment; and (c) the operation and maintenance of chlorination equipment that may be installed with your pool. Take notes for later reference.

Insurance

If you have an insurance policy covering your house and contents, advise the insurance company that you are having a pool built and check that your pool will be covered by your house policy. You may have to increase your coverage or arrange an extension to your existing house and contents policy.

For Further Information

You can contact: BSA on 1300 272 272; SPASA on 3252 6777; BSA-licensed pool builders; or your local government or private certifier.