

Why Should I Fence My Lagoon?

Drowning is the second leading cause of accidental death of children. Fencing of lagoons is essential to protect children, pets and other animals. An on-site lagoon receives all liquid waste from the house of the property it serves. This waste includes toilet, sink and bath tub and laundry waste. The lagoon allows the solids in the liquid waste to settle and promotes the growth of bacteria necessary to decompose the solids. If introduced into the lagoon by a family member or visitor, diseases such as infectious hepatitis, typhoid fever and dysentery can exist until decomposition occurs.

A fence for the lagoon is necessary for the following reasons:

1. Prevent access of the lagoon to children and pets who may come in contact with and possibly spread any diseases which may be in the lagoon.
2. Prevent access of the lagoon to children for whom the water in the lagoon may provide a drowning hazard.
3. Prevent access of the lagoon to grazing animals who can destroy the berm surrounding the lagoon.

A fence placed on top of the berm should be placed in the middle of the berm to make mowing the embankment and slopes easier. A large (at least 4 ft wide) gate should be provided to allow easy access. If livestock will be around the lagoon, the fence should be at or beyond the outside toe of the embankment slope. This keeps livestock off the embankment thus preventing erosion and damage.

Fence openings should be no larger than about 8 square inches (2 x 4 or 2 ¾ x 2 ¾ inches). The material should be strong enough to stand up to children, wildlife and livestock, if present. The kind and size of animals must be considered in selecting fence material. The fence should be at least 4 ft tall but may need to be taller. One barbwire strand should also be placed at the bottom edge of the fence to discourage animals from going under. One or two barbed wire strands must also top the fence when livestock are around the lagoon.