



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DEPARTMENT**  
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TO: Development Services Customers

SUBJECT: **INFORMATION BULLETIN 222**  
Splash Pad Requirements

DATE: February 19, 2016

CREATED BY: Plan Review Division

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**Purpose:**

As a customer service initiative, the Development Services Department (DSD) has created this Information Bulletin (IB) 222 in order to describe and clarify the requirements for the use of Commercial “Splash Pads” and other similar recreational areas. The City of San Antonio has compiled the following information in an effort to assist customers with design related questions.

**Scope:**

“Splash Pads” are typically an open outdoor zero-depth water attraction feature used for recreational purposes and are usually designed with water sprays, ground nozzle effects, and other water play features often activated by motion or timed sensors. Design plans may or may not include structural components. They are typically installed at public parks, pool areas, subdivision community parks, multi-family apartment complex’s, amusement parks, and other similar areas.

“Splash Pads” and other similar recreational areas shall comply with the applicable construction, alteration, storage, and treatment requirements as covered by the International Plumbing Code (IPC), wiring regulations covered by the National Electrical Code (NEC) and building standards covered by the International Building Code (IBC). Designed water systems used for “Splash Pads” would not include rain harvesting, recycled water or swimming pools as defined by the IPC and IBC.

**Design:**

**Building:** Outdoor, “Splash Pads” may be submitted as a [commercial sitework permit application](#) or as part of an overall building permit. If canopies or other structures larger than 300 square feet are proposed, a [building permit application](#) is to be submitted and additional detailed plans will be required to be prepared and submitted by the design professional for plan review compliance verification. Where multiple canopies or other structures larger than 300 square feet are proposed, a [multiple building permit form](#) shall

be submitted with the permit application. The typically timeline for this review under a sitework permit process is 10 days.

**Plumbing:** These areas shall be designed so as to prevent storm, rain, surface, or ground water from entering the sanitary sewer system. Where used, secondary drainage piping used for maintenance and draining of the tank shall discharge through a bypass, backwater valve, and indirect waste connection by means of an air gap or air break prior to discharging to the sanitary sewer.

Commercial on site storage tank owners shall register tanks if combined storage on a single property is over five thousand gallons or if there is potable make up water. Coordination with the San Antonio Water Systems (SAWS) Conservation department is required per Chapter 34, Article IV City Ordinance.

Storage tanks shall be constructed of durable, nonabsorbent and corrosion resistant materials. Tanks shall be constructed of materials compatible with any disinfection systems used to treat water quality. Tanks shall be supported in accordance with the International Building Code (IBC). The tank shall be equipped with an overflow pipe and vent sized as specified by the design professional. These openings shall be protected against the entrance of vermin and insects. The overflow pipe shall discharge to the storm drainage system or other approved surface drainage area. Tanks shall be provided with a lockable device or other approved method of securing access. Where non-potable systems are supplied with makeup water from a potable source, the potable makeup water line shall be protected by both an air gap and a RP backflow device. Storage tanks located over the Edward Aquifer Recharge Protection Zones and when approved by SAWS must comply with the most current regulations outlined Chapter 35-521 City Ordinance.

**Electrical:** Grounding of electrical equipment shall be grounded in accordance with Parts V, VI, and VII of the NEC - Article 250. Where provided, additional equipment shall be grounded in accordance with Article 680. Overhead conductors, luminaries, and other equipment rated at more than 50 volts shall not be installed within the footprint of the “Splash Pad” area and shall maintain a 10’ horizontal distance from the outside edge of intended wet play area. Listed low voltage contact limit luminaries may be installed within 5’ from the outside edge of intended wet play area. As it relates to this Information Bulletin, the “intended wet play area” is the area designed to be intentionally sprayed or saturated with water and typically falls within the footprint of the “Splash pad”.

With exception to low voltage controls, underground wiring shall not be permitted under the “Splash pad” or within 5’ horizontally from the outside edge of the intended wet play area. Pump motors and other loads directly related to the circulation and sanitation systems shall be GFCI protected. Receptacles, luminaries, lighting outlets, ceiling suspended fans, and other outlets located within 20’ the outside edge of the intended wet play area shall be GFCI protected.

Bonding of poured concrete, applied concrete, concrete plastered or painted block shall be considered as conductive and shall be bonded. Bonding of the “Splash Pad” intended wet play areas shall be accomplished by means of an approved equipotential bonding system as specified by the NEC. The portion of the, “Splash Pad” wet play area shall be bonded with unencapsulated reinforcing steel arranged in a uniform 12” x 12” grid, or a minimum #8AWG bare solid copper conductor grid arranged in 12” x 12” uniformed pattern. Perimeter surfaces located up to 3-feet beyond the outside edge of intended wet play area shall be bonded by a minimum #8AWG bare solid copper listed connection to the “Splash Pad” reinforcing steel or copper grid at a minimum of four even spaced points along the perimeter. All above grade metallic objects located within the pad and within 5’ of the perimeter surface of intended wet play areas shall be bonded.

**Treatment:** Nonpotable storage tanks used for Splash Pad shall be treated, filtered, and disinfected for end use and approved by the Building Official for its intended application and as regulated by the current and applicable Texas Administrative Code requirements. Where this process discharges nonpotable water to the building sanitary drainage system, it shall be through a bypass, backwater valves, and indirect waste pipe by means of an air gap or air break.

**Materials, Testing, Identification:** All materials, joints, connections, inspection and tests shall conform to the standards and requirements specified by the applicable codes.

**Permits and Inspections:** Proposals of these designs shall be submitted as building, plumbing and electrical plans in order to ensure proper consideration for code compliance. The design shall be prepared by a registered design professional. A registered Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners (TSPBE) licensed Responsible Master Plumber (RMP) shall permit applicable: backflow devices, air gaps, potable make-up water lines, valves, indirect connections, vents, sanitary drainage piping, labeling, signage, storage tanks and overflows. A registered Texas State Master Electrician licensed by Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation shall permit applicable service equipment, equipment, luminaries, feeders, branch circuits, bonding systems and control wiring.

Registered applicants will submit plans for review for compliance prior to the issuance of a building permit and associated trade permits.

**Summary:**

This information Bulletin is for informational purposes only.

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