

## Media Release – **INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY AVAILABLE**

Friday November 4<sup>th</sup>, 2016

Attention Queensland Media

**SCHOOL HOLIDAY WARNING IN \_\_\_\_\_**

**UNSAFE POOLS A POTENTIAL “DEATH TRAP”**

**OWNERS URGED TO PRIORITISE POOL SAFETY FOLLOWING THE FATAL DROWNINGS OF TWO YOUNG SISTERS IN LOGAN**

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As the summer school holidays swiftly approach, apartment and unit owners in \_\_\_\_\_ are being urged to crack down on pool safety following the tragic drowning of two young girls south of Brisbane.

One in 4 Brisbane pools do not meet the proper safety standards and ahead of the summer period, the peak body for Queensland's \$100 billion strata sector is making urgent calls to see pools in strata communities made safe. (Editors – see attached)

The National Drowning Report for 2015 identified that December, January and February were the deadliest months for drownings, and bodies corporate are being urged to play a role in safe-guarding the 1.1 million Queenslanders calling apartments and units home.

“Swimming pools are a great addition to any strata community, but without regular management, they can become a real risk, especially in communities with a high number of young families” Strata Community Australia (Qld) President Simon Barnard said today.

“You only have to look at the stats to realise we're coming into a high risk period and it is important special efforts are made to ensure pools are compliant.”

Strata Community Australia (Qld) is the peak industry body for Body Corporate and Community Title Management in Queensland and Mr Barnard says this recent tragedy must be the catalyst for urgent action.

“Despite the State Government placing a November 30 deadline on pools passing critical safety standards, countless communities in \_\_\_\_\_ will go into summer with a non compliant pool and that's not good enough.”

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“Inspectors and installers of pool safety gear are busier than ever, but the reality is that there aren’t enough to do the job before November 30, and that’s where bodies corporate must play a role.”

“If State Government say-so isn’t enough to spring communities into action, we hope these awful events motivate bodies corporate to amend the safety of their pools.”

Come December 1, the State Government has previously mentioned the possibility of random inspections taking place in suburbs throughout the state and SCA (Qld) hopes strata communities will set examples by complying ahead of time.

Mr Barnard says apartment and unit blocks are no longer just an investors paradise, with countless families throughout Queensland choosing the high density life, and that requires a keen focus on strategies to keep children safe.

“It’s the responsibility of bodies corporate to maintain the best interests of their community, and in communities with a high number of families; safe-proofing communal areas and facilities such as pools and spas from potentially life-threatening situations must be high on the agenda.”

“Life threatening situations can take place at any time, and owners must ensure that they aren’t treating these inspections as far off deadlines.”

Mr Barnard says SCA (Qld) is determined to lead the pack nationally and support bodies corporate to achieve a dramatic reduction in pool related emergencies across 2016 and into the future.

“The only way we can make this a reality is to ensure that all parties; managers, owners and residents communicate with one another and work to maintain a safe community.”

Kidsafe QLD and pool safety advocates Kids Alive have joined forces to “shut the gate” on pool drowning.

Over the last ten years, more than 150 children under five have drowned in swimming pools, and SCA (Qld) will be sharing the following 5 points with its members prior to the summer period.

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## **Kids Alive are urging all pool owners to “DO THE FIVE”**

1. Fence the pool
2. Shut the Gate
3. Teach your kids to swim- it's great
4. Supervise- watch your mate and
5. Learn how to resuscitate

ENDS