



In-Ground Swimming Pools Can Be a Major Investment.

People build in-ground swimming pools for many reasons - social, aesthetic or for health reasons. Whether you are a practical consumer or an extravagant dreamer, seeking a tropical paradise with tumbling waterfall, Liquid Assets Pools and the NSPI advise you to keep in mind your needs, desires and budget before making any purchasing decisions.

Before choosing a dealer or builder, think about how your family will use the swimming pool. Do they like to play a lot of water sports, swim laps or just splash around? Thinking about usage and then designing with those needs in mind is the key to building a pool that your entire family will be happy with for years to come.

When you decide on the type and design of your pool, you want to select the right contractor or builder. You should select a pool contractor or dealer as carefully as you would an architect or builder for your home. The NSPI suggests the following before signing a contract:

- Obtain at least three bids and compare them. Make sure the contractor's bid specifies the materials to be used, including quantity, brand, size, color, etc. Keep in mind that the lowest bid is not always the best.
- Make sure the contractor's paperwork is in order. Ask to see the contractor's license and certificates of insurance. Contact the licensing board to verify. Contractors are required to obtain licenses from state, city and/or county agencies.
- Ask for references and check them out.

- Find out who will be doing the actual work - the contractor's employees or subcontractors. If the firm uses sub-contractors for some of their work - such as from a tile company - you will need to research both the tile firm's reputation, as well as the contractor. You also want to determine who will be responsible for problems down the road. Issues such as these should be resolved before construction begins.
- Find out if the builder can make any necessary site and soil evaluations of your property. The contractor should also know about existing zone, building and grading requirements.
- Some pool builders offer financing, but you want to shop various lenders to find the best terms.
- Do not be pressured into signing a contract right away. Take your time and review the contract carefully. If you do not understand the contract, do not sign it.
- Make sure all warranties for labor and materials are in writing.
- When paying for your pool, never pay in cash. Use your credit card, check or money order. And, never pay the full amount upfront.