

Who is Virginia Graeme Baker?

More about the young girl who inspired the *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool and Spa Safety Act*.



The *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act (P&SS Act)* takes its name from Virginia Graeme Baker, a young girl who drowned after she was trapped under water by the powerful suction from a hot tub drain.

A twin and the youngest of five, 7-year-old Graeme, as her family called her, was the daughter of Nancy and James Baker IV, the son of former Secretary of State James Baker III. A member of her community swim and diving team, Graeme was able to swim without assistance since she was 3 years old.

In June 2002, Graeme became stuck to a hot tub drain and was unable to pull herself free. Efforts by her mother to pull Graeme from the drain proved unsuccessful. Two men who eventually freed Graeme from the spa pulled so hard that the drain cover broke from the force. Graeme died from drowning, but the real cause of her death was suction entrapment due to a faulty drain cover.

After her tragic death, her mother, Nancy Baker, worked tirelessly to advocate for pool and spa safety. Mrs. Baker, her family and Safe Kids Worldwide actively lobbied Congress to win support for a law to require anti-entrapment drain covers and other safety devices, as needed. The statute, which was sponsored by U.S. Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz of Florida, was signed into law by the President in December 2007.

To carry out the requirements of the *Virginia Graeme Baker Pool & Spa Safety Act*, CPSC launched *Pool Safely: Simple Steps Save Lives*, a national public education campaign to raise public awareness about drowning and entrapment prevention, support industry compliance with the Act's requirements, and improve safety at the nation's pools and spas.