

4-year-old rescued after arm gets stuck in pool drain

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Crews had to rescue a 4-year-old girl from a swimming pool when her arm got stuck in a pipe Sunday.

The pool pipe had a protective covering, but it was found at the bottom of the pool Monday.

For an hour Sunday evening firefighters on Merritt Island held the young girl's head out of the water while trying to dislodge her arm from a vacuum fixture in the side of the pool.

The girl, whose name has not been released by Brevard County Fire Rescue, was swimming with a babysitter when she apparently stuck her hand and then arm into the small hole in the pool wall.

Complex manager Caleb Santiago said the vacuum wasn't running at the time so there was no suction when the girl got stuck, and that the fixture originally had a cover as required before the incident.

"Someone had to unthread for quite a while to take it off. So some kid was playing with it. Who knows how it came off?" said Santiago.

Firefighters started to drain the pool, lowering the water level by a few inches to prevent the girl from drowning while they worked to free her.

The manager of the Country Club Apartments said the girl should have never been in the pool.

"It's a very hard thing to control, it's very hard. We have 240 units here and sometimes people show up," said Santiago.

Santiago said the girl was neither a tenant nor was she a guest of anyone at the complex.

Santiago said the girl was with a group of people who were never given permission to use the pool, and walked right past the signs saying pool passes are required.

Santiago said health department inspectors came by Monday morning and found no problems with the pool, though it remains locked for now.

The cover on the side of the pool has been replaced.

The child was taken to a hospital to be examined. She did not suffer life-threatening injuries.