

The Corporation of the City of Clarence-Rockland

By-law 2025-27

A by-law to establish standards, regulations and maintenance requirements for privately-owned outdoor swimming pools, hot tub, their enclosures and equipment.

WHEREAS Section 11 (2), paragraph 6, of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended, (hereinafter the "Municipal Act 2001") authorizes a municipality to pass by-laws respecting the health, safety and wellbeing of persons; and

WHEREAS Section 11 (3), paragraph 7, of the Municipal Act 2001, authorizes a municipality to pass by-laws respecting structures, including fences and signs; and

WHEREAS Section 8 (3) of the Municipal Act 2001, authorizes a municipality to regulate or prohibit in respect of matters within their jurisdiction, including fences, and to require persons to obtain permits and provide for a system of obtaining permits in relation to those matters; and

WHEREAS Section 391.1 (a) of the Municipal Act 2001 provides that a municipality may pass bylaws imposing fees or charges on persons for services or activities provided or done by or on behalf of it including permit fees for pool enclosure permits; and

WHEREAS the Council of the Corporation of the City of Clarence-Rockland deems it necessary to regulate enclosures for outdoor pools within the City of Clarence-Rockland;

Therefore, the Council of The Corporation of the City of Clarence-Rockland enacts as follows:

1. Definitions

In this by law:

- 1.1. *Building Permit* shall mean a permit issued under the Ontario Building Code.
- 1.2. *Chief Building Official* shall mean the person appointed by the City Council to such position pursuant to the Building Code Act.

- 1.3. *City* shall mean The Corporation of the City of Clarence-Rockland.
- 1.4. *Construct* means to do anything in the erection, installation and includes the installation of a pool unit fabricated or moved from elsewhere.
- 1.5. *Double fence gate* refers to a gate system comprised of two gate panels (or "leaves") that swing open in opposite directions from a central point, creating a wider opening than a single gate.
- 1.6. *Fence* shall mean a wall, a structure or a building which encloses a swimming pool or hot tub and can include a fence combined with a deck. A fence does not include a cedar hedge or any landscaping features.
- 1.7. *Gate* shall mean any part of a fence which opens on hinges and includes a door located in the wall of an attached or detached garage or carport which forms part of the fence, but does not include an overhead garage door, or slide to the side garage door.
- 1.8. *Hedge* means a continuous line of thick shrubs or trees, which is densely planted and intended to be maintained at an even height.
- 1.9. *Hot tub* shall include those pools commonly referred to as a whirlpool, a Jacuzzi, hydro massage pool, spa or a swim spa.
- 1.10. *Lot line, front* shall mean:
 - a. in the case of an interior lot, the lot line dividing the lot from the street,
 - b. in the case of a corner lot, through lot, or through corner lot, the shortest of the lot lines that divide the lot from the road shall be deemed the front lot line,
 - c. in the case of a corner lot, through lot, or through corner lot where such lot lines are of equal length, the City may deem any of the lot lines that divide the lot from the road as the front lot line;
- 1.11. *Lot line, rear* shall mean the lot line opposite to, and most distant from, the front lot line, but where the side lot lines intersect, as in the case of a triangular lot, the rear lot line shall be represented by the apex of the triangle formed by the intersection of the side lot lines.
- 1.12. *Lot line, side* shall mean a lot line other than a front lot line or a rear lot line.
- 1.13. *Maintain* shall mean to carry out repairs of any part or parts of a fence so that it can properly perform the intended function.
- 1.14. *Manager* means the City of Clarence-Rockland's Manager or designate.

- 1.15. *Officer* means the Chief Building Official, Building Inspector or Compliance Officer or designate.
- 1.16. *Overhead garage door* shall mean any garage door that opens overhead, which is intended to allow for vehicular entry to, and exit from, the garage.
- 1.17. *Owner* shall mean the registered owner of the land and includes a lessee, mortgagee in possession, or the person in charge of the property.
- 1.18. *Permit* shall mean a permit issued under this by-law, including:
 - a. Hot tub Installation Permit
 - b. Above Ground Pool Installation Permit
 - c. Semi Inground Pool Installation Permit
 - d. Inground Pool Installation Permit
 - e. Swim Spa Installation Permit
 - f. Seasonal Pool Installation Permit
- 1.19. *Power cord* shall mean an electrical cable that temporarily connects an appliance or a powered structure to the mains electricity supply via a wall socket or extension cord.
- 1.20. *Replacement* shall mean the construction of a fence that takes the place of a fence previously constructed.
- 1.21. *Self-closing device* shall mean a mechanical device or spring which returns a fence gate to its closed position within 30 seconds after it has been opened.
- 1.22. *Self-latching device* shall mean a mechanical device or latch which is engaged each time the fence gate is secured to its closed position, which will not allow the fence gate to be re-opened by pushing or pulling, and which will ensure the fence gate remains closed until unlatched by either lifting or turning the device itself directly or by a key.
- 1.23. *Slide to the Side garage door* shall mean any garage door that opens to the side instead of overhead, which is intended to allow for vehicular entry to, and exit from, the garage.
- 1.24. *Swimming pool* shall mean a structure, basin, chamber, or tank containing or capable of containing water, and is designed to be used for swimming or wading. This includes, any inground pool, above-ground pool, semi inground pool, seasonal pool, that;
 - a. has a depth of more than 60 centimetres (23.6 inches) at any point; and
 - b. has a surface area of more than 1 square metre (10.8 square feet); and
 - c. is not under the jurisdiction of the Building Code; and
 - d. is not completely inside a building; and

- e. is not owned by government or a local board or commission constituted under any statute or by-law; and
- f. is not a pond or reservoir to be utilized for farming purposes; and
- g. but excludes hot tub if they have a lid that is fitted and secured when not in use; and
- h. excludes storm water management ponds.

2. General Provisions

- 2.1. This by-law shall be administered by the Chief Building Official.
- 2.2. This by-law shall apply to all fences constructed or replaced within the limits of the City of Clarence-Rockland on the date that this by-law takes effect.
- 2.3. Any existing fence that was constructed prior to the adoption of this by-law, and in accordance with the existing regulations at the time, shall be considered legal, non-conforming, and may be maintained in accordance with such regulations.
- 2.4. Upon the replacement of an existing fence, such replacement shall be constructed in accordance with this current by-law.
- 2.5. When a fence is constructed so that it functions as a boundary fence between two or more adjacent properties, in addition to its function as a swimming pool or hot tub fence, the provisions of this by-law prevail over any other City by-law that regulates fences.
- 2.6. Where a fence has enclosed a swimming pool or hot tub in accordance with the regulations that existed before this by-law takes effect and that fence has been maintained continuously in accordance with those regulations, and which fence also marks the boundary between abutting properties, that fence shall be deemed to be in conformity should a swimming pool or hot tub be constructed on any of the abutting properties to the extent of the shared portion of the fence between the two abutting properties. All other portion of the fence that enclose the newly constructed swimming pool or hot tub shall meet the standards set out in this current by-law.
- 2.7. The permit holder shall be held liable for any cost incurred by the City to repair any damages caused to the City's property during installation of a swimming pool, hot tub or fence.

- 2.8. Metric and imperial measurements are provided solely for the purpose of convenience. In the event of a conflict between the metric and imperial measurements provided in this by-law, the metric measurements shall prevail.

3. Permit requirements

- 3.1. No person shall install, cause to be installed, have, keep or replace a swimming pool or hot tub without having first obtained a permit.
- 3.2. A Building Permit is also required for a new deck construction and the permit holder must comply with the Ontario Building Code Act.
- 3.3. A seasonal pool permit is valid for one year only. A new application must be submitted each year.
- 3.4. All related Permit Fees shall be in accordance with the City's current User Fees By-law.
- 3.5. If any swimming pool or any hot tub are installed before first obtaining a permit, the permit fee shall be double as per the City's current User Fees By-Law.
- 3.6. If the final inspection is failed, the permit holder shall be required to bring modifications to comply with this by-law and shall contact the construction department to schedule a new final inspection subject to an additional fee, as set out in the City's current User Fee By-law.
- 3.7. A permit is valid for a maximum of 18 months from the date of issuance. The permit holder is responsible to contact the City to schedule a final inspection within the 18 months period. The Chief Building Official may extend the maximum 18 months period if the permit holder requests an extension in writing prior to the permit expiry.
- 3.8. If a permit has not been closed within the prescribed time, the permit holder shall pay an addition fee for the final inspection as per the City's current User Fee By-law.
- 3.9. A pre-consultation inspection may be requested in writing by the permit holder. An additional fee is applicable as set out in City's current User Fee By-law.

4. Application for permit

- 4.1. An application for a permit to install a new swimming pool or hot tub or for the replacement of an existing swimming pool or hot tub shall be made in writing by completing a prescribed form available on the City's website or at City Hall.
- 4.2. All such applications shall be accompanied by the following:
 - a. The municipal address for the subject property.
 - b. Lot dimensions with location of all property lines for the subject property.
 - c. Plans showing the location and the dimension of the proposed swimming pool or hot tub and any other accessories which are an integral part of the swimming pool or hot tub structure.
 - d. The location, type, and height of fence to be used to enclose the proposed new swimming pool or hot tub structure, including all gates and mechanism.
 - e. The location and size of any existing accessory structures such as deck, shed, or any other accessory structure.
 - f. The location of all proposed swimming pool or hot tub equipment such as filters and heaters.
 - g. The location of the septic field, septic tank, swales, easement, detached structures and catch basin. Location of catch basin on neighbouring properties as well.
- 4.3. An application for a permit shall not be deemed to be received until all the required documents have been submitted.
- 4.4. No permit shall be issued until such time as the final grading inspection of the property has been completed and approved by the City's Engineer, when applicable.
 - a. For some properties, a conditional permit may be issued by the Chief Building Official if the owner or builder has submitted a written request and as included the as-built plan. In this case, the conditional permit shall remain open until final grading inspection is completed and approved by the City's Engineer.
- 4.5. The Chief Building Official shall issue a permit where the plans submitted appear to comply with all applicable regulations and the requirements of the by-law have been met.
- 4.6. A grading plan is required for all inground swimming pools where the proposed surrounding apron of the pool is within 1.5 metres (5

ft) of the property lines. When required, a copy of the proposed grading plan must be submitted along with the pool application documents. The grading plan must illustrate both the existing and proposed drainage pattern.

- 4.7. The permit holder is responsible for contacting the City at least 24 hours in advance to schedule an inspection.
- 4.8. If the permit holder installs new electrical wiring, a copy of the ESA report must be provided before closing the permit.

5. Location and Fencing - Hot tubs/Swim spa/Spa

- 5.1. No person shall install any hot tub in the front yard.
- 5.2. No person shall install any hot tub under a hydro line.
- 5.3. No person shall install a hot tub at no less than 1 metre (40 inches) to any interior or exterior side lot line and 1 metre (40 inches) to the rear lot line or within an easement.
- 5.4. No person shall construct a shed or an accessory building closer than 1.5 meters (5 ft) of any hot tub.
- 5.5. No person shall install a hot tub without being surrounded with a fence, according to the fence requirements under Section 7.
- 5.6. Notwithstanding Section 5.5, if a hot tub is equipped with a locking lid, no fence is required. However, the lid must be in place and locked at all times when not in use.

6. Location - Inground pool/Above ground pool/Semi inground pool/Seasonal pool

- 6.1. No person shall install any type of a swimming pool in the front yard.
- 6.2. No person shall install any swimming pool under a hydro line.
- 6.3. No person shall install a swimming pool at no less than 1.5 meters (5 ft) to any exterior side lot line, an interior side lot line or rear lot line or within an easement.
- 6.4. No person shall install a swimming pool's pumping, filtration or heating equipment at no less than 1.0 meter (40 inches) of any interior property line, at no less than 1.0 meter (40 inches) of any rear property line, or at no less than 1.5 meters (5 ft) of all exterior property line, or within an easement.

- 6.5. No person shall construct a shed or an accessory building closer than 1.5 meters (5 ft) of any swimming pool.
- 6.6. No person shall install a swimming pool's pumping, filtration or heating equipment at no less than 1.5 meter (5 ft) of all swimming pools, unless they are installed under a deck or inside a building adjacent to the swimming pool.
- 6.7. Seasonal pool filtration system may be eligible for an exemption in relation to the distance between the pool and the filtration system.

7. Fencing Requirements – Inground pool/Above ground pool/Semi inground pool/Seasonal pool/Hot tub

- 7.1. No person shall install, cause to be installed, have or keep a swimming pool or hot tub which is not completely enclosed by a fence, in accordance with this by-law.
- 7.2. No person shall install or cause to be installed a fence that does not conform to the requirements of this by-law.
- 7.3. No person shall fail to have, keep or maintain a fence in accordance with this by-law.
- 7.4. Every swimming pool or hot tub shall be enclosed by a fence which shall extend from the ground to a height of not less than 1.5 metres (5 ft) but not greater than the height allowed in the Fences and Privacy Screens By-law.
- 7.5. The height of the fence, including any gates, shall be measured from ground level or from any climbable fixture or feature on the exterior side of the fence.
- 7.6. Every gate on a fence shall be equipped with a self-closing device and a self-latching device with a lock. Every person shall have the fence gate closed and locked at all times when the swimming pool or hot tub is not being used.
- 7.7. No person shall install or maintain a self-latching device on a fence gate that can be opened without a key from the outside at less than 1.2 metres (4 ft) above ground level.
- 7.8. The fence that forms part of this enclosure shall:
 - a. be constructed solidly.
 - b. be constructed in such a manner as to prevent children from climbing.

- c. have no openings that could let in a spherical object with a diameter of 10 cm (4 inches) or more.
 - d. be built in a manner that the distance between ground level and the fence does not exceed 10 cm (4 inches).
 - e. for horizontal fences, its horizontal structural members must be located inside the enclosure to prevent easy climbing unless the fence has no openings greater than 3.8 cm (1.5 inches) and the horizontal members are at least 0.6 metres (2 feet) apart.
 - f. for other than chain link fences, where the vertical distance between each horizontal rail measured from the top of the bottom rail, to the top of the next one above it, is 1.15 metres or greater, the openings in the fence are permitted to be greater than 3.8 cm but not greater than that which would allow the passage of a spherical object having a diameter of 10 cm (4 inches).
- 7.9. No person shall place or store or cause to be place or store any materials against the outside of a fence.
- 7.10. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 7.1, a fence is not required to be erected upon lands abutting the Ottawa river provided that there is no access to the said lands by the public at large: it being provided however that this exception will only be permitted if side yard fences are erected along the boundary lines of the lands and premises where the swimming pool or hot tub is located which fence shall be minimum of 1.5 metres (5 ft) in height and which fence shall extend beyond the water's edge.
- 7.11. Every swimming pool or hot tub facing overhead garage door, or swimming pool or hot tub facing side sliding garage door which makes up part of the fence, shall be equipped, with a device that automatically closes the overhead garage door, or side sliding garage door within one minute of being passed through; and where the garage contains both a front and rear overhead or side sliding garage door to create a through way, only one of the two doors may remain open following the clearance of a vehicle, object, or person.
- 7.12. No person shall install or maintain a double fence gate without one of the two gates having a self-closing device and a self-latching device with a lock. The gate of this double fence gate access without a self-closing device and a self-latching device must have a device permanently affixed to the ground or other non-movable

object, that prevents access through this gate without lifting or removing this device and then releasing the latch.

8. Additional Fencing Requirements - Above Ground and Semi Inground Swimming Pool

- 8.1. Above ground swimming pool vertical walls can be considered as a fence if the wall of an above ground pool has at least 1.5 meters (5 ft) in height or is equipped with a guard giving a minimal height of 1.5 meters (5 ft) measured from the finished grade of the property.
- 8.2. An above ground swimming pool totally or partially surrounded by a walkway adjacent to the pool wall must be surrounded by a guard conforming to the Ontario Building Code for height and to a minimum height of 1.5 meters (5 ft), measured from the finished grade of the property. Also, this walkway must not be built in a manner that will permit climbing.
- 8.3. Gates forming part of a deck or a patio must:
 - a. have a minimal height of 1.2 meters (4 ft) in height, in regard to the adjacent floor or equal to the top of the last step adjacent to the gate.
 - b. be equipped with a self-closing device and with a self-latching device. The self-latching device must be installed inside the pool area at more than 1.2 meter (4 ft) in height from the adjacent floor or from the last step adjacent to the gate.
 - c. have no openings that could let in a spherical object with a diameter of 10 cm (4 inches) or more.
- 8.4. The ladder area, or deck, which provides access to the above ground pool, is enclosed by a gated enclosure that is self-latching and self-closing with a lock.

9. Temporary fence - New construction

- 9.1. Every permit holder installing a new swimming pool or hot tub shall maintain temporary fencing surrounding the swimming pool or hot tub during all phases of construction, such that unauthorized access is prevented.
- 9.2. Every person installing a swimming pool or hot tub shall ensure that the temporary fencing required in section 9.1 above complies with all the following requirements:

- a. shall be a minimum of 1.2 meters (4 ft) in height.
 - b. if chain link, plastic mesh, or wire fencing, it shall have no openings greater than 5 centimetres (2 inches).
 - c. if other than chain link, plastic mesh, or wire fencing, it shall have no openings greater than 10 centimetres (4 inches).
 - d. shall have vertical support by T bar posts or similar posts at a maximum separation distance between posts of 2.4 meters (8 ft).
 - e. shall have a horizontal support near the top and bottom of the fence, which shall be wood, wire or rope; which will ensure the fence is kept tight between posts; and
 - f. shall not have clearance from the surface below to the underside of the temporary fence of greater than 5 centimetres (2 inches).
- 9.3. Every permit holder having constructed temporary fencing, shall inform the City before the initial filing of the swimming pool or hot tub.
- 9.4. Every person having constructed temporary fencing, during a new swimming pool or hot tub installation, shall not allow temporary fencing to be in place for more than 120 days from the initial filling of the swimming pool or hot tub.

10. Temporary fence – Existing swimming pool or hot tub

- 10.1. Where a swimming pool or hot tub is in existence on the date of the passing of this by-law, and fencing requires maintenance, repair or replacement, a person may fill a swimming pool or hot tub or cause or permit water to remain in the swimming pool or hot tub, if there is temporary fencing in place in compliance with section 9.2 of this by-law, but only where such temporary fencing is in place for no longer than 30 days, or such longer period of time if approved in writing by the Chief Building Official.

11. Water Fill

- 11.1. No person shall fill any type of swimming pool or any hot tub or cause or permit water to remain within the swimming pool or hot tub, if not completely surrounded with a fence according to the provisions of this By-law.

12. Draining of wastewater

- 12.1. No person shall discharge water from a swimming pool or hot tub into the municipal storm sewer or a catch basin unless it has been dechlorinated for 7-10 days prior to drainage.
- 12.2. No person shall discharge salt water from a swimming pool or hot tub into the storm sewer or catch basin.
- 12.3. No person shall drain discharge water from a swimming pool or hot tub as to cause this water to flow onto neighbouring properties, to cause ponding onto a road or street or to cause damages, erosion to any property. The drainage of wastewater shall be done as a slow trickle onto its own property as to be absorbed into the ground.

13. Ground Elevation

- 13.1. No person shall install any swimming pool, hot tub, or a fence if the existing grades or landscaping patterns are modified, unless otherwise approved by the City's Engineer. The finished grade of the premises, after the installation is completed, shall comply with the lot grades and drainage pattern approved by the City's Engineer.
- 13.2. No person shall obstruct, block, or deviate a swale and/or the overland flow route as indicated on a plan of subdivision, if applicable.

14. Setback from the Septic treatment unit

- 14.1. As per the Ontario Building Code, any swimming pool and hot tub shall be installed at no less than 5 meters (16.5 ft) from septic field and at no less than 1.5 meters (5 ft) from septic tank. Owner of such property shall be responsible to provide plan of location of these distances provided by the South Nation Conservation Authority.

15. ESA – Electrical Safety Authority Report

- 15.1. Any filtration system must not be connected to a power cord.
- 15.2. All new electrical wiring must be inspected and approved by the electrical safety authority (ESA).

16. Enforcement and Inspection

- 16.1. The provisions of this By-law shall be enforced by the Chief Building Official or appointed designate.
- 16.2. The Chief Building Official or appointed designate may carry out an inspection to determine if the provisions of this By-law are being complied with and shall have the right to enter lands pursuant to Paragraph 436 (1) of the Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, c. 25, as amended.
- 16.3. An Officer may, for the purposes of an inspection under subsection (16.2):
 - a. require the production of documents or things relevant to the inspection; and
 - b. inspect and remove documents or things relevant to the inspection for the purposes of making copies or extracts; and
 - c. require information from any person concerning a matter related to the inspection.
- 16.4. An Officer may be accompanied by such persons as are necessary for conducting the inspection or for carrying out any required work.
- 16.5. No person shall hinder or obstruct or attempt to hinder or obstruct an Officer in the discharge of his or her duties under this by-law.

17. Enforcement Orders

- 17.1. Where an Officer determines that a contravention of this by-law has occurred, the Officer may make an Order requiring the permit holder or the owner of the property on which the contravention occurred, to discontinue the contravening activity and to carry out such work to bring the enclosure into conformity with the requirements of this bylaw.
- 17.2. An Order under paragraph 17.1 shall set out:
 - a. reasonable details of the contravention, sufficient to identify the contravention and the location of the property on which the contravention occurred; and
 - b. the work to be done to restore the enclosure to a condition where it complies with the requirements of this by-law; and
 - c. the requirement to obtain all necessary permits or other approvals prior to performing any work; and

- d. the date or dates by which there must be compliance with the Order.
- 17.3. No permit holder or property owner shall fail to comply with an Order issued pursuant to paragraph 17.1.

18. Service

- 18.1. An Order issued pursuant to Section 17 shall be served personally, be posted in a conspicuous place on the property where the contravention occurred or be sent by registered mail to the last known address of the person contravening this by-law.
- 18.2. Where an Order issued pursuant to Section 17 is sent by registered mail, it shall be sent to the last known address of the owner or their agent who caused or permitted the contravention, and the Order shall be deemed to have been served on the fifth day after the Order is mailed.
- 18.3. Where an Order under Section 17 is served personally, it shall be deemed to have been served on the date of delivery to the person or persons named.
- 18.4. The posting of an Order issued pursuant to Section 17 on the affected property shall be deemed to be sufficient notice of the Order on the person to whom the order is directed on the date it is posted.
- 18.5. Where a person does not comply with an Order issued under this by-law, an Officer, with such assistance of others as may be required, may affect compliance at the expense of the owner.
- 18.6. The City has the authority to recover the costs incurred in ensuring compliance with an Order issued under Section 17 either through legal action or by adding the incurred costs to the property tax roll, where they will be collected in the same manner as property taxes.

19. Offence and penalties

- 19.1. Any person who contravenes any provision of this By-law shall be liable to pay the City an Administrative Monetary Penalty, upon issuance of a penalty notice in accordance with the City of Clarence-Rockland Administrative Monetary Penalties System (AMPS) By-law, as may be amended from time to time.

19.2. Any person who contravenes any provisions of this by-law is guilty of an offence and upon conviction shall forfeit and pay a penalty as provided for in the Provincial Offences Act, R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P.33 and amendments thereto.

19.3. Each day that a person contravenes with the provisions of this Bylaw, may constitute a separate offence.

20. Severability

20.1. If any provision or part of this By-law is declared by any court or tribunal of competent jurisdiction to be illegal, inoperative, or ultra vires, in whole or in part, or inoperative in particular circumstances, the balance of the By-law, or its application in other circumstances, shall not be affected and shall continue to be in full force and effect.

21. Order Prohibiting

21.1. When a person has been convicted of an offence under the provisions of this By-law, any court of competent jurisdiction thereafter may, in addition to any other penalty imposed on the person convicted, issue an order prohibiting the continuation or repetition of the offence or the doing of any act by person convicted directed towards the continuation or repetition of the offence.

22. Short Title

22.1. This By-law may be referred to as the "Swimming Pool By-law".

23. Amend

23.1. That Schedule A-2 of By-law 2022-33, Administrative Monetary Penalties System By-law, shall be and is hereby replaced with Schedule A-2 attached hereto.

23.2. That Schedule G of By-Law 2024-118, 2025 User Fees By-law, shall be and is hereby replaced with Schedule G attached hereto.

23.3. That Schedule A of By-Law 2015-172, Building By-law, shall be and is hereby replaced with Schedule A attached hereto.

24. Repeal

24.1. That By-law No. 2022-49 shall be and is hereby repealed.

24.2. That By-law No. 2021-23 shall be and is hereby repealed.

25. Effective Date

25.1. This By-law shall come into force and effect on the day of its adoption.

Read, passed and adopted in open council this 19th day of March 2025.

Mario Zanth, Mayor

Monique Ouellet, Clerk