

# Planning for a Power or Water Disruption in a Child Care Centre

Preparing for a water or power disruption before it happens is the best way to ensure that you can continue to provide safe and appropriate care for the children at your facility. The following are some things to consider when you are planning for emergency situations.

## Power Disruption

- Prepare an emergency menu that includes food items that require little or no cooking.
- Plan to obtain a supply of ice. Develop a business relationship with a supplier of ice to ensure ice can be provided promptly when needed.
- During the summer, plan for ways to stay cool.

### For large facilities:

- Consider access to an electrical generator that can be used to operate critical pieces of equipment such as refrigeration.
- Consider a refrigerated truck that can be delivered to your facility. Develop a business relationship with a supplier to ensure prompt delivery of the truck when needed.

## Water Disruption

- Plan an emergency menu with food items that need little or no water to prepare.
- Stock an inventory of single-use items, bottled water, containers suitable for hauling water, and hand sanitizer.
- Plan for loss of toilet use for both children and staff.

If power and water are lost for an extended period, you should develop a plan for the closure of the facility and emergency pick-up of children.

## Additional Consideration – Preparation of an Emergency Kit

In a large-scale emergency, childcare centres that normally close at night may need to extend operation until all children are picked-up. Facilities should plan for provisions for staff and children for **72 hours** in the areas of:

**Water:** plan for 2 litres of drinking water per person. Additional water will be needed for sanitation.

**Food:** Maintain a 72-hour supply of food that does not need refrigeration and is suitable for long-term storage. Choose age appropriate foods for the children in care. Include formula, diapers and special items for infants.

**First aid:** Maintain a portable first aid kit.

**Clothing and bedding:** Extra clothing for the children and extra bedding and blankets.

**Emergency supplies:** Portable battery operated radio, flashlights, and personal hygiene and sanitation supplies including chlorine bleach.

### Special items:

- Consider children's medical needs.
- Have a list of emergency numbers available for the children including, if possible, out of area or out of province, contact numbers. These extra contacts are important if the telephone service is also disrupted by the emergency. Long distance lines are often restored before local lines.

Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada has detailed information on general emergency preparedness and the creation of emergency kits. They are located at [www.psepc.gc.ca](http://www.psepc.gc.ca)

### The facility must cease operation and close if:

- There is no water available for drinking or hand washing
- Food cannot be safely prepared and served
- Proper cleaning and sanitizing cannot be achieved
- The water interruption or power outage has made safe operation of the facility impossible

**Reference:** Adapted with permission from the Middlesex London Health Unit