



Florida Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education

Environmental Health Self-Assessment Survey for Disaster Recovery

The Florida Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education (CSPECE) program within the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) is an initiative to help keep children safe from harmful environmental hazards during care. **This supplemental survey was developed by the Florida CSPECE initiative for childcare providers to self-assess the environmental health of their property/facility and/or family childcare home in conjunction with disaster recovery.** The survey helps to identify environmental hazards that may be harmful to children while they are in care. The survey can ultimately help to reduce risk from possible biological, chemical and physical hazards in the environment that can occur right before, during and/or after a disaster.

LIMITATIONS: FDOH's goal is to identify possible environmental hazards associated with disasters to help protect public health. The survey was developed based on knowledge and data available at the time of the survey. FDOH cannot guarantee all possible environmental hazards associated with disasters will be identified.

For any questions, please call the Hazardous Waste Site Health Risk Assessment Program Toll-Free at 877-798-2772, or contact the Program at:

ChooseSafePlacesFlorida@flhealth.gov

or

Hazardous Waste Site Health Risk Assessment Program
Attn: Choose Safe Places
Florida Department of Health
Division of Disease Control and Health Protection
Bureau of Environmental Health
4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A-08
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Florida Department of Health

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**1. Which of the following events are you currently recovering from?
(Check all that apply)**

- Flooding (if checked, please make sure to also answer Question #2)
- Wildfire (if checked, please make sure to also answer Question #4)
- High wind
- Hurricane
- Drought
- Power outage / Prolonged loss of electricity
- Extreme heat
- Extreme cold
- Radiation
- Disaster debris (e.g., washing machines, refrigerators, computers, wood, glass and other building debris)
- Other (describe): _____

****Physical hazards are often described as factors within the environment that can harm the body without touching it.****

****Children should be discouraged from playing on or near debris because of physical and chemical hazards.****

**2. Flooding Events
(Check all that apply)**

(a) Was or is the outdoor space currently flooded?

- Yes No Unknown

If yes, do children have access to the outdoor space?

- Yes No Unknown

****Floodwater and standing water pose various risks, including infectious diseases, chemical hazards, injuries and drowning.****

(b) Was or is the indoor space currently flooded?

- Yes No Unknown

If yes, do children have access to the indoor space?

- Yes No Unknown

If yes, have you actively started drying and ventilating flooded areas?

- Yes No Unknown

****Children should not contact floodwater or sediments left behind. Children can be exposed to environmental hazards such as infectious diseases and mold through direct contact with their skin, by breathing in dust particles or fumes or putting their hands in their mouths.****

**3. Water - Supply, Quality and Disposal
(Check all that apply)**

(a) Drinking water

- The property uses water from a municipal source
- The property uses a well:
 - for drinking for irrigation
 - the property has one or more wells
- The property uses a cistern:
 - for drinking for irrigation the property has one or more cisterns

****Wells and cisterns can become contaminated after a disaster. Environmental hazards such as microorganisms and chemicals can cause sickness.****

Please answer following if you have a well(s) and/or cistern(s):

- I don't know if the wells/cisterns on this property have been tested
- The wells/cisterns on this property have not been tested
- The drinking water wells/cisterns have been previously tested for bacteria and/or chemical contaminants.

****Flooding events and droughts can change groundwater condition and migration of contamination plumes can make wells and cisterns unsafe.****

If checked, please specify [date and results]:

****Flooding events can increase nitrate levels in well and cistern water.****

- The irrigation water wells/cisterns have been previously tested for bacteria and/or chemical contaminants. *If checked, please specify [date and results]:*

(b) Is a water advisory currently in effect?

- Yes, *please specify:*
 - Do-Not-Use-Water Do-Not-Drink-Water
 - Boil water before use
- No
- I don't know

****During some disasters, septic systems could become saturated, preventing proper operation, which can lead to contamination of ground and surface water.****

(c) Wastewater disposal

- A municipal system is used for wastewater disposal
 - A septic system is used for wastewater disposal
- If a septic system is used for wastewater disposal:*
- The septic system has been inspected/serviced since the event
 - The septic system has not been inspected/serviced since the event

**4. Air Quality
(Check all that apply)**

(a) Are any of the following used during and after a disaster event at your property?

- Portable generator
- Weed whackers
- Blowers
- Lawn mowers
- Wood burning stoves
- Outdoor boilers
- Refrigerating units
- Diesel/gasoline machinery (backhoes, cranes, etc.)

****During disaster recovery, many common activities including use of certain equipment and appliances could affect the outdoor and indoor air quality.****

- Pressure washers
- Additional trucks for recovery operations such as debris removal or electrical line work
- Other, please specify:

(If any of the above items are checked, please make sure to also answer Question #7.)

(b) Outdoor air quality

- Have you ever checked the outdoor air quality of your location using the EPA AQI Outdoor (www.airnow.gov) air quality information?
 - Yes No Unknown

****Outdoor air quality information is provided at: www.airnow.gov.****

(c) Indoor air quality

- A carbon monoxide detector is installed
 - Yes No Unknown
 - Working
- A smoke detector is installed
 - Yes No Unknown
 - Working
- An HVAC system is installed
 - Yes No Unknow
 - Working

****Due to their higher metabolic rate, infants and children have increased susceptibility of carbon monoxide toxicity.****

If the response is yes to any of the above, provide maintenance/inspection date and results for each:

- The property is regularly ventilated with fresh outdoor air
 - Yes No Unknown

**5. Chemical Products (Cleaning, Disinfection, Fragranced, Pesticides)
(Check all that apply)**

(a) Are chemical products used at your property?

- Yes No Unknown

****Chemical cleaning products can contain toxic chemicals that can cause harm via skin contact, breathing and incidental ingestion****

*****Note:** *If yes, we recommend using the chemical products at the end of the day/week after the children leave and ensure sufficient ventilation of the room for the chemical to air out before children are allowed back in.*

(b) If chemical products are used, are they out kept of reach of children?

- Yes No Unknown

If no, please specify how products are stored:

****All pesticides exhibit some level of toxicity that could pose a health hazard for children and staff.****

(c) Does staff who uses or applies the chemical products wear protective gear such as safety glasses and gloves?

- Yes No Unknown Other

If other, please specify type of protection:

****Cleanup activities can expose people to mold, dust, microorganisms and chemicals. All cleanup participants must be educated to understand the potential risk and follow protective measures, including wearing of proper personal protective equipment.****

6. Building Damage (Check all that apply)

(a) Did/Does the building have any water damage due to the event(s) selected in Question 1?

- Yes No Unknown Other

If yes, have you inspected the building for mold?

- Yes No Unknown

****Water damage and mold are common challenges after a disaster. Mold can grow on wet materials and exposure can lead to serious illness including fever-type symptoms, sneezing, running nose, red eyes, skin rash, asthma attacks and other lung irritations.****

(b) Did/Does the building have any structural damages (e.g., due to the event(s) selected in Question 1?

- Yes No Unknown Other

****Building damage can create situations where it's harder to protect children from heat or cold.****

*****NOTE:** Disasters can cause structural building damage, including damaged walls. Building materials containing asbestos and lead-based paints were common before 1989 and 1978, respectively. If your facility/home was built before 1989 and/or 1978, the original building materials and walls may contain asbestos and/or have been painted with lead-based paint.

Further, structural building damages and flooding could lead to increased radon levels. Therefore, re-testing after a disaster like a hurricane is recommended. Be aware, if your program is within a county that requires testing by statute. If repairs are conducted that constitute a "significant structural change," new testing is required. To check if you are required to test for radon, see here: www.floridahealth.gov/environmental-health/radon/maps/index.html.

Exposure to lead can affect the developing brain and nervous system in children. Exposure to asbestos and radon can increase risk of developing some cancers such as lung cancer and mesothelioma. Therefore, structural building damages and walls must be carefully contained and renovated.

7. Noise
(Check all that apply)

(a) Do you experience any loud noises possibly from machinery or apparatus used on or near the property while children are in attendance (for example see #4.a)

- Yes No

If yes, have you taken any actions/efforts to prevent and/or control the noises?

- Limit amount of time children are close to loud noises
- Create quiet time and spaces
- Use of sound absorbing materials and barriers
- All of the above
- None
- Other, please specify:

****Loud noises can be uncomfortable for children and can cause hearing damage or hearing loss, as well as physiological, motivational and cognitive health concerns.****

8. Emergency Plan

(a) Do you have an Emergency Plan in place?

- Yes No Unknown

****An emergency plan specifies procedures for handling sudden or unexpected situations. It can prevent injuries and reduce damages to building and equipment (such as wells, cisterns, septic system).****

NOTE:
The survey was created based on information collected from:

[CDC / ATSDR] Center for Disease Control and Prevention / Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry. 2020. Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education – Disaster Recovery Supplement. 71pp.