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Keeping Kids Safe

Child Care Provider Emergency Planning Guide

DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

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Introduction

This guide is a tool to help you and your child care program prepare for disasters and emergencies, such as fire, floods, severe weather, and violent incidents.

Keeping Kids Safe will help you be ready to respond to emergencies while you're caring for children in your home or center-based child care.

The first two sections of this guide explain best practices for emergency preparedness. These sections provide emergency planning steps and explain how to identify emergency risks you may face. The last two sections of this guide provide you with resources. You will find links and references to help you gather additional information on emergency preparedness, a template for writing an emergency plan and additional forms to support your emergency plan.

During an emergency, you may not have the time or ability to rely on your computer. You should keep a copy of your emergency plan readily accessible during an emergency. It is recommended that you also keep copies in your vehicle and shelter location.

Update your emergency plan often. It is recommended that you update your emergency plan at least annually.

The terms "child care" or "provider" are used to describe all licensed child care providers (family- and center-based), license exempt centers that are registered to receive Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) payments, and all legal non-licensed providers who are registered to receive CCAP payments.

If you are not a licensed child care provider, but are caring for children of family members, friends, or neighbors on an occasional basis, this guide also contains valuable information to help keep you and the children in your care safe.

Section 1: Planning and preparing

Emergencies happen suddenly. When you are taking care of children, it is critical to plan before an emergency occurs. This section can help you plan and prepare for an emergency.

Section 1 offers information, tips, and best practices that you can use when creating your emergency plan.

Record emergency numbers and business information

- Create a safe storage place for important business records or keep copies in a safe place outside your home/center, such as a safety deposit box in a bank.
- Write down emergency phone numbers (see Provider Emergency Contact Information Form in Section 4 as an example).
- Look at utility bills for emergency outage information.
- Look up contact information for local police and emergency managers.
- Check with your insurance agent about the details of the coverage for your business and make sure you have coverage for emergencies and disasters.

Get emergency contact information from children's parents/guardians

It is important to inform all parents/guardians of children you care for about your emergency plan and about any actions you plan to take if an emergency occurs. (See Child Emergency Contact Information Form in Section 4 for an example, or use forms that already contain this information.)

Steps you can take in planning for emergencies:

- Make several copies of emergency contact information from children's parents/guardians list and keep them accessible, including one in your emergency kit and one in your designated storm shelter. We also recommend storing numbers and copies of documents in your mobile phone so that you have access to them during and after an emergency.
- Have signed consent forms or emergency situation directions from parents/guardians on file so you can arrange for emergency medical care or treatment when parents/guardians cannot be reached. This is especially important for children with disabilities and with chronic medical conditions.
- Review contact information at least annually and update as information changes.

There is an emergency information form available at: http://www.acep.org/Clinical---Practice-Management/Emergency-Information-Form-for-Children-With-Special-Health-Care-Needs/

Train yourself and children to respond to emergencies

Teach older children how to help respond to an emergency by showing them how to dial 9-1-1 should you or other caregivers become incapacitated. Children can start learning this skill as young as three years old, depending on their individual level of understanding.

Be prepared for any extra accommodations you may have to make for infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and children with chronic medical conditions.

Remember to pack medications and medication administration forms.

Create emergency kits in a special bag or backpack, and keep in accessible places in a special bag or backpack. Having one or two kits in your home/center and one in your vehicle are recommended.

If you want to do more, you can join local emergency response efforts. In some Minnesota communities, Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) are forming to train people in emergency preparedness and response. Contact your county to find out if there is a CERT in your area at http://www.mncounties.org/aboutmnc/counties/county_websites.php

Make your home/center and vehicle safe and ready

Some things you can do to help prevent and respond to common emergencies in your home/center include:

- Install and maintain smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors (or a combined smoke-carbon monoxide unit) that have been listed by Underwriter Laboratory on each level of the home/center, especially in sleeping areas and hallways outside sleeping areas.
- Keep a fire extinguisher (with at least a "2 A 10 BC" rating) in the kitchen or near the furnace room. Know how to use it, and have it inspected annually.
- Gather emergency supplies in an accessible place such as near an outside door and in your car. To determine what supplies are needed, go to https://www.ready.gov/ or access the toolkit provided by the General Services Administration (GSA): https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/GSAChildCareEmergencyPreparednessToolbox_June_2014.pdf
- Display and train caregivers and staff on shelter-in-place locations and procedures.
- Display and train caregivers and staff on escape routes from all levels of the home/center: each room should have two escape routes. One can be a window that children can open easily. Make sure escape routes are not blocked by furniture or other obstacles.

For more information on home/center safety, see the following:

- *Your Home/center Fire Safety Checklist*, available from the Red Cross website at: http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/types-of-emergencies/fire
- The Healthy Home's section at the Minnesota Department of Health Website at http://www.health.state.mn.us/topics/healthyhomes/
- Child care information sheets are available on the Minnesota Department of Public Safety's website at https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/sfm/programs-services/inspections/Pages/day-care-foster-care-inspection.aspx
- Download the Red Cross Emergency mobile phone app: http://www.redcross.org/get-help/prepare-for-emergencies/mobile-apps
- Download the FEMA app: https://www.fema.gov/mobile-app

Protect your child care business

To protect yourself from the financial fallout of an emergency, talk to an insurance agent about coverage you should have for your business.

Consider additional risks you may have in your neighborhood. For example, if you live near a river or creek known to flood, you may be eligible to purchase flood insurance. Contact your local emergency manager for information: (https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/contact/pages/county-emergency-managers.aspx). Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance information is online at http://www.floodsmart.gov/floodsmart/pages/index.jsp).

Sanitary sewers can back up into your home/center during floods or very heavy storms, even if you do not live near a river or creek. Check with your insurance agent as to whether you have or can add sewer backup coverage to your existing policy.

Create safe storage for your child care financial records, such as a fireproof box or an electronic file backup to a flash drive or a cloud-based storage system that can be accessed from any internet connection. Backup your information regularly.

Know your local emergency warning systems

Rely on several types of warning systems when possible. Take shelter if the weather looks threatening, even if an alarm has not been activated. Some storms can be very fast-moving.

Tune in to a local commercial radio or TV station to monitor events or use a mobile app to listen to a local radio station. Keep a battery-operated radio handy in case the electricity goes out.

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) is a national radio network that broadcasts weather warnings and other hazard information 24 hours a day. The broadcasts cannot be heard on a regular AM/FM radio; a special receiver can be purchased at many retail outlets, including electronics, department, sporting goods, and boat accessory stores, as well as directly from manufacturers online. Consider buying a receiver that can be programmed by county (otherwise it will go off any time there is an alert anywhere in the state). Free options are available for those with smart phones through the Apple or Android app stores (e.g., American Red Cross Tornado is available for iPhones and Android phones).

More information is available on the NOAA website at http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr, including Weather Radio All Hazards (NWR) receiver consumer information, station listings for Minnesota, and NOAA NWR for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing.

The outdoor warning siren is the best known type of warning. When the steady siren sounds, it always means "go indoors and seek additional information." The most frequently used signal is a steady three-to-five minute tone used for tornadoes or other severe weather.

Take shelter immediately with a battery-operated radio to receive updates on the latest developments.

Communities in Minnesota test their outdoor warning sirens at 1 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month. If you take care of children who are new to Minnesota, let them know that these are test sirens.

> Note: Outdoor warning sirens are not meant to warn people who are indoors during a disaster. Newer homes/centers, which tend to be more soundproof, may block out this sound.

Local authorities may use cars with public address systems to warn you of an emergency in your immediate neighborhood. Listen for them to tell you what to do to protect yourself in the particular incident.

Become aware of other alert systems. Some Minnesota counties have a CodeRed notification system or a similar system that can notify you of emergencies (search: "Minnesota [county name] CodeRed"). As technology advances, watch for ways to set up alerts through a telephone network, by internet or email, or by smartphone.

Pay attention to other activity in your neighborhood. If you hear police sirens or helicopters near your home/center, a dangerous situation might be developing where it would be wise to keep children in the home/center.

What to do when you hear these warnings …

Commercial broadcast radio and television: Tune in to your local commercial radio or television stations for updates and instructions from authorities. Since power outages are more likely to happen during bad weather, have your battery-operated radio ready. Make sure that you have an adequate supply of batteries.

Identify your neighborhood's emergency risks and have a plan for each

The most common Minnesota emergencies that start outside the home/center are tornadoes and severe thunderstorms, but some neighborhoods have other special concerns.

Think ahead about planning a response:

- If you live near a chemical plant
- If you live near a major freeway or railroad where chemicals are transported
- If you live near a nuclear power plant
- If you live near a river or area that tends to flood.

Contact your county emergency manager to find out whether there are any special risk factors in your neighborhood that you should plan to respond to in an emergency (to learn who your county emergency manager is, visit: https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/contact/pages/county-emergency-managers.aspx).

Section II of this guide outlines the most common emergencies faced in Minnesota - some that could happen anywhere in the state, and some that tend to happen in certain locations.

Decide how you will respond to emergencies and share your plan with parents/guardians

Your emergency plan should lay out what you will do and where you will go in an emergency, including:

Shelter-in-place and Lock-Down Procedures

"Shelter-in-place" means taking refuge in an interior room with no windows when an emergency occurs and it is safer to be inside than to evacuate. "Lock-down" means keeping you and your kids in a secure place within the building in response to an outside threat.

- Determine how to shelter-in-place. For weather-related emergencies such as tornadoes, stay away from doors and windows and stay in a basement room reinforced with concrete.
- Find locations in your home/center where you can protect everyone.

Evacuation and Relocation Procedures

If you need to evacuate your home/center and/or your property, how will you get out safely?

- You should plan to stay in your building unless it is unsafe to be there.

- Pick a place outside and away from the home/center, where everyone will meet if you need to leave your home/center quickly. Arrange a nearby alternate site or two where you can care for the children.
- Consider how you will get infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities out safely and have any special equipment ready.

Isolation Procedures

Keeping yourself or one or more children who are sick in a confined area is sometimes necessary to prevent the spread of infectious disease. Set a policy of sending sick children home and of closing your child care if you are sick. Make sure parents/guardians are informed of exclusion policies and encourage them to have a backup plan for child care when needed for any emergency.

Communication and Reunification Procedures

Share your emergency plan with parents/guardians so they know what to expect if an emergency occurs. Make sure they have contact information for you (home/center, cell, email), and an emergency contact outside your home/center. Parents/guardians should have a copy of your evacuation/relocation procedures, know where you are supposed to go, and where to locate their children in different emergency scenarios.

Practice your plan's procedures

You should practice emergency drills regularly. When the monthly outdoor warning sirens sound at 1 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month, it is a good reminder to practice and update your emergency plan. This includes updating emergency-specific procedures, all contact numbers, and checking emergency supplies. It is recommended that you practice each type of response (evacuation and relocation; shelter-in-place and lock-down; communication and reunification with parents/guardians) at least three times per year.

When practicing emergency drills:

- Remember that you should stay in your building unless it is unsafe to be inside.
- Teach each child where to go and what to do in each type of emergency in a way that is age and ability appropriate.
- Be ready to evacuate children in care, with special planning for infants and children with a disability.
- When practicing and responding to an emergency, tell the children very directly and calmly what they need to do. If you are practicing evacuating your home/center, for instance, use short phrases like "Go out now."
- The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) may be able to assist you with basic disaster response skills. Contact your county to find out.

When emergency strikes

When an emergency strikes, respond calmly to keep the children from panicking. That's where planning and practice are useful.

During emergencies, give simple explanations to the children along with very direct words about what you want them to do. Giving them too many details may scare them.

Shelter-in-place or evacuate according to your emergency procedures. You may try to distract the children by reading them a book or giving them a snack.

If you are a licensed child care provider and any of the children in your care are injured and require treatment by a physician, state regulations require you to report to your licensor (within 24 hours if you are a licensed center and immediately if you are a licensed family child care provider). If you experience a fire that requires response by a fire department, state regulations require you to report to your licensor within 48 hours.

Post-disaster stress in young children

Children's reactions to disasters can vary greatly depending on their age and ability to understand what has happened AND on how their parents/guardians and other caregivers react to the event. When children suffer trauma after an emergency, the following tips may be helpful:

- Help them feel secure by comforting them when they need you.
- Give them more choices to restore their sense of control.
- Stick to a routine that the children can depend on. Prepare them early for any changes to that routine, when possible.
- Allow children to express their feelings, letting them know it is okay to feel mad, scared, etc. Also, distract them by focusing on positive things.
- Alert a child's parents/guardians if he or she shows post-disaster stress in extreme or inappropriate ways so that they might get the child needed mental health care. Issues could include highly intense or continued behavior issues.
- Take care of yourself physically and emotionally so you can better help the children and teach them good coping skills.

For more detailed information, see:

How Can Trauma Affect My Young Child?, the University of Minnesota's Center for Early Education and Development:
http://education.umn.edu/ceed/publications/questionsaboutkids/traumaenglish.pdf

Helping Children Respond to Disasters, Bananas, Inc.: http://bananasbunch.org/portfolio/helping-children-respond-to-disasters/

Basic checklist for planning

Below is a summary what you should to do to prepare for an emergency.

Step 1. Record emergency numbers and business information

- Record basic information about your child care business.
- List phone numbers you can call during an emergency and for help in emergency preparedness planning.

Step 2. Get emergency contact information from children's parents/guardians

- List parent/guardian contact information and make several copies.
- Have signed emergency consent forms for each child in care.
- Review contact information frequently and update when information changes.
- Have instructions for children with disabilities and/or with chronic medical conditions.

Step 3. Train yourself to respond to emergencies

- Teach older children to help respond in an emergency (9-1-1).
- Create emergency supply kits.
- Prepare your emergency plan.

Step 4. Make your home/center and vehicle safe and ready

- Evaluate your emergency preparedness and home/center for safety by using the GSA's Child Care Emergency Preparedness Toolbox: https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/GSAChildCareEmergencyPreparednessToolbox_June_2014.pdf
- Complete the checklist for emergency training and supplies.
- Install and maintain working smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) detectors.
- Keep a fire extinguisher near the cooking area.

Step 5. Protect your child care business

- Check with your insurance agent about coverage for your business.
- Create safe storage for child care business records.

Step 6. Know your local emergency warning systems

- Identify how you will get warnings when disasters occur.
- Know where you will tune to on radio or TV to get updates on an emergency situation.

Step 7. Identify your neighborhood's emergency risks

- Call the county or city emergency manager to find out local risks and list those risks in the emergency plan.

Step 8. Decide how you will respond to these risks and share your emergency plan with parents/guardians

- Record your evacuation plan in case of an emergency.
- Record your plan to protect yourself in your home/center (shelter-in-place) in case of an emergency.
- Identify policies and procedures that will help stop the spread of infectious disease in your child care home/center.
- When your plan is completed, give a copy to each parent or guardian of the children in your care.

Step 9. Practice your emergency plan

- Plan a regular time to practice your emergency plan's procedures with the children, at least two to three times per year for both evacuation and sheltering in place.

Step 10. When disaster strikes...

- Follow risk and response guidance described in Section II, or from emergency broadcasts.

Section 2: Emergency risks and your response

There are several kinds of emergencies you might face, some of them more common (like winter storms) and a few caused by specific hazards in your neighborhood (a chemical spill at a business). Knowing and practicing basic responses will help you know how to respond quickly and effectively.

This section outlines most of the emergencies you could face, along with the actions you should take to keep you and the children you care for safe. Take time to review all of the potential emergencies regularly so you are ready to respond when needed.

FIRE

When you see flames or smell smoke in the home/center:

- Before you open a door, feel for heat on the surface. If it is hot, check other ways to exit the room and home/center.
- Immediately get yourself and all of the children outside.
- Gather all the children at a designated spot away from the fire. Count heads to make sure everyone got out.
- If these items are handy and there is time, take your emergency kit, your emergency plan, your contact list, and your cell phone. If you have a copy of these lists in your car, get them from there instead.
- Call 9-1-1 to report the fire.
- DO NOT go back into the home/center until fire responders say it is safe to do so.

If you are trapped inside:

- Try to get everyone to a safe place inside the home/center.
- Count heads to make sure all children are with you.
- Seal the door(s), especially those between you and the fire. Place a wet blanket or towel at the bottom of the door to slow/stop smoke from coming into the room.
- Open or close windows as appropriate. Close them if smoke or other dangerous fumes would blow in; open them if you can use them to escape, to get fresh air, or to signal for help.
- Try to keep the children calm.
- Contact the fire department however you can.
- After the immediate emergency has ended, contact parents/guardians. If you are a licensed provider, you should call your licensor.

FLOODS AND FLASH FLOODS

Floods can happen during snow melt in the spring, after heavy rainstorms, or because of an ice or debris jam on a river.

Flash floods are a very sudden rise of water within six hours of heavy rain, after a dam or levee failure, or following a sudden release of water held by an ice or debris jam.

Good practices include:

- Listen to weather reports and follow the advice of emergency responders.
- If needed, evacuate to higher ground as waters rise out of the area.
- When driving toward the flooding, turn around instead of trying to drive through the deep water.

Further information about flood safety is available from the National Weather Service at http://www.weather.gov/floodsafety/index.shtml

GAS/CHEMICAL LEAKS

When you smell gas fumes in your home/center you should:

- Evacuate the building if you believe the leak is from inside the home/center.
- Do not use any electrical switches, telephones (landlines or cell phones) or anything that could cause an electric spark while in the home/center.
- Go to a safe location in a nearby home/center or building.
- Call your gas company's emergency line, and dial 9-1-1 as soon as possible. Never assume that someone else has reported the gas leak. Alert your neighbors.
- Never try to repair a gas leak yourself. Leave all repairs to a trained technician.

When you smell gas fumes outside of your home/center you should:

- Call your gas company's emergency line, and dial 9-1-1 as soon as possible. Never assume that someone else has reported the gas leak. Alert your neighbors.
- Follow directions for safety professionals.
- Never try to repair a gas leak yourself. Leave all repairs to a trained technician.

Further information about gas leaks is available from Center Point Energy at http://www.centerpointenergy.com/en-us/business/safety/natural-gas-leak?sa=MN

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Hazardous materials are all around in the form of products we use every day. Accidents can happen where they are manufactured, transported, stored, used, or disposed of. Good practices include:

- Call 9-1-1 as soon as possible if you see a hazardous materials accident, spill or leak.
- Turn on your local radio or television station if you hear a warning siren, and listen for instructions from emergency responders. They might advise you to evacuate or to take shelter in your home/center, depending on the circumstances. Follow their advice immediately.
- Stay away from the incident site to minimize your chances of contamination.

If you are caught outside during an incident (such as during a field trip or walk in the park): try to stay upstream, uphill, and upwind of hazardous materials. Hazardous materials can quickly be transported by water and wind. In general, try to go at least one-half mile (10 city blocks) from the danger area; for many incidents you will need to go much farther.

Avoid contact with the hazardous substance and do not eat or drink anything that might have been contaminated.

When in a motor vehicle, close off ventilation and shut windows.

A useful resource, Hazardous Materials Incidents by Stearns County, is available at http://co.stearns.mn.us/Portals/0/docs/Department%20Files/EmergencyMgmt/EOP/L%20-%20Hazardous%20Materials.pdf

HIGH TEMPERATURES

Minnesotans are used to cooler weather, so heat waves can hit hard. Small children are especially at risk for heat reactions. To protect children, make sure they:ww

- Slow down, especially during the hottest part of the afternoon.
- Stay in the coolest available place; air-conditioned space is usually best.
- Dress for summer; wear lightweight, light-colored clothing as it reflects heat and sunlight and helps bodies stay cooler.
- Eat less food. Heavy meals can heat up bodies.
- Drink lots of water, even if the children say they are not thirsty.
- Stay out of the sun. When children are outside, provide a shaded area, such as trees, umbrellas, etc.
- Play outside for short periods.

- Play outside earlier or later in the day, staying indoors between noon and 4 p.m. Use your best judgment on timing; if you are hot, they are too.

For more detailed information:

The National Weather Service has a chart that provides a general assessment of the likelihood of heat disorders based on the current temperature and humidity.
http://www.weather.gov/media/unr/heatindex.pdf

Heat Wave: A Summer Killer includes helpful information from NOAA, FEMA and the American Red Cross. It is available online at http://www.nws.noaa.gov/os/brochures/heat_wave.shtml

INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Serious infectious diseases are transmitted in several different ways, including physical contact with an infected person or animal through:

- Objects the person has touched.
- Airborne droplets carrying the disease, spread by coughing or sneezing.
- Bug bites and stings.
- Food contamination.

Limiting the spread of germs prevents the spread of infectious disease. You and/or the children should routinely:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water upon entering your home/center and often throughout the day.
- Wash hands before and after using shared materials, such as toys and play dough – especially with infants and young toddlers who tend to put things in their mouth.
- Avoid coughing or sneezing into your hands. Instead, cover coughs or sneezes with tissues or the inside of your elbow. Put used tissues in the waste basket. Clean your hands after coughing or sneezing.
- Keep plenty of hygiene supplies handy, such as tissues and soap.
- Keep toys clean. Wash any toy a child has put in his or her mouth before letting another child play with it.
- Use clean and safe food preparation techniques.
- Keep diaper changing areas separate from areas occupied by children and food preparation areas; sanitize often.
- Keep home/center pets healthy.
- Avoid sharing personal items, such as drinking glasses and combs.
- Ensure that the children in your care have all their recommended vaccinations.
- Give medication to children ONLY with a doctor's prescription and signed parent/guardian permission.

If a child gets sick while at your home/center, isolate the child from you and the other children. Check on the child regularly for any change in condition. Call the parent/guardian to request that they pick up their child as soon as possible, and make sure the child is well before coming back to child care. Notify other parents/guardians so they are aware of the risk to their children.

If you catch an infectious disease, isolate yourself until your illness passes. It is recommended that you do not care for children while you are infectious.

If an infectious disease threat arises, such as an E. coli bacteria outbreak, the Department of Health will issue directions on how to protect yourself and the children. Schools and child care centers may be closed in infected areas.

If a pandemic flu epidemic threat arises, the governor and the Department of Public Safety will issue instructions designed to prevent the spread of the disease. Schools, churches, child care, and other public gathering places may be closed.

For more detailed information:

Pandemic Flu Planning Checklist for Individuals and Families, available from the Centers for Disease Control at http://www.pandemicflu.gov.

A directory of county public health departments in Minnesota is available from the Minnesota Department of Health at http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/opi/gov/find/ or call your county offices to get the number.

NUCLEAR POWER PLANT ACCIDENT

Two nuclear power generating plants are located in Minnesota: one in Red Wing (Goodhue County), and one in Monticello (Wright County). If there is a radiological accident, the plants have emergency plans in place. If you live in one of these areas, contact the numbers below for instructions on how to complete your emergency plan.

> Note: DO NOT call these numbers during an actual emergency because the lines need to be kept open for emergency responders.

Plant: Prairie Island Nuclear Power Plant

Affected counties: Goodhue (and others nearby)

Web link to plant: https://www.xcelenergy.com/energy_portfolio/electricity/nuclear/prairie_island

Contact for emergency planning info:

- Goodhue County emergency management director - (651) 267-2640
- City of Red Wing emergency management director - (651) 267-2611

Plant: Monticello Nuclear Power Plant

Affected counties: Sherburne and Wright (and others nearby)

Web link to plant: http://www.xcelenergy.com/Customer_Support/Contact_Us_Form

Contact for emergency planning info:

- Wright County emergency management director - (763) 682-7326
- Sherburne County emergency management director - (763) 241-4560

For more information, please see the 2016 Emergency Planning Guide and Calendar, developed by Xcel Energy, is available at https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/radiological-emergency-preparedness/Pages/planning-guides.aspx.

SEVERE WINTER WEATHER

Severe winter snowstorms can bring strong winds, blizzard conditions with blinding snow, severe drifting and dangerous wind chill. Strong winds can knock down trees, utility poles and power lines. Keep children indoors during these storms. Even when it is not storming, be cautious about cold weather hazards by:

- Listening to NOAA weather radio, or local radio and television stations for the latest weather reports and emergency information.
- Paying attention to wind chill reports to decide if, and for how long, children can play outside while in your care. The National Weather Service has a chart that shows how long it takes for frostbite to occur based on the current temperature and wind speed. http://www.nws.noaa.gov/om/winter/windchill.shtml
- Dressing children warmly for playing outside in colder weather: several layers of clothes, boots, gloves or mittens, and a hat.
- Limiting play time out in the cold.
- Being careful about the surfaces on which children skate or sled, making sure that ice is thick enough to hold them, and deep snow is packed enough so they do not sink in.

Minnesota's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Department maintains a Winter Hazard Awareness page at https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/weather-awareness-preparedness/Pages/winter-weather.aspx

See Minnesota Safety Council website at http://www.minnesotasafetycouncil.org/home.cfm

THUNDERSTORMS

With thunderstorms come lightning strikes and possible heavy rain, strong winds, hail, and tornadoes. Tune in to your local radio and television stations or NOAA weather radio to stay informed about weather developments.

When the weather becomes severe, take shelter in your home/center and be ready to head for your tornado shelter, if needed. If you hear thunder, the storm is close enough for you to be hit by lightning – you can remind children that, "When thunder roars, go indoors!" This unstable weather can become dangerous very fast.

See *Determining Severe Weather Shelter Areas in Buildings*, from the Metropolitan Emergency Managers Association at
http://www.severeweather.state.mn.us/Documents/TornadoShelterAreaDetermination.pdf

TORNADOES

A tornado is a violently rotating column of air that extends from the base of a thunderstorm to the ground. In Minnesota, tornadoes strike most often between June and August, but have been known to strike from mid-March to mid-November. They typically hit between 4 and 9 p.m.

Tornado Watch means conditions in the area are such that a tornado may develop.

Tornado Warning is issued when a tornado is imminent. The community outdoor warning siren (three-to-five minute steady blast) will sound, and you will get alerts from the NOAA weather radio and other warning systems. TAKE SHELTER IMMEDIATELY AT THIS TIME.

Remember: A WATCH means to watch the sky for a possible tornado. A WARNING means a tornado has been spotted nearby.

As dark clouds and storms move in:

- Turn on your NOAA weather radio, or listen to local commercial radio and television stations for weather updates, warnings, expirations, or extensions.
- Take shelter with the children if skies appear threatening, even if the outdoor siren has not sounded. These storm systems can move more quickly than the warning systems can be activated.
- Call the children's parents/guardians to let them know their children are safe.

Bring an emergency kit to your shelter-in-place locations and, as time allows, collect the following:

- Battery-operated or hand-operated radio.

- Your emergency plan with parent/guardian contact numbers.
- Flashlight or other light source.
- Cell phone.
- Extra batteries and a backup electricity source for cell phone charging.
- Snack food and beverages.
- Books or toys for the children.

For more detailed information, see:

Tornado Basics, by NOAA, can be found at
http://www.nssl.noaa.gov/primer/tornado/tor_basics.html

Determining Severe Weather Shelter Areas in Buildings, by the Metropolitan Emergency Managers' Association, is available at

http://www.severeweather.state.mn.us/Documents/TornadoShelterAreaDetermination.pdf

VIOLENT INCIDENTS

Violent incidents are rarer than many of the other disasters, but they are very important to plan for because, when they do occur, the action is very sudden and fast-breaking.

Two types of situations happen:

- Incidents that start nearby or outside of your property. Examples of this could include a bomb threat nearby or a robbery in the neighborhood where the suspect is fleeing to take cover. You may find out about these incidents when you hear emergency response noises in the neighborhood, through news reports of the incident, or if a police patrol stops by to warn you. Neighborhood violent incidents can escalate fast and possibly spill over onto your property.
- Incidents where someone in your home/center is the target. Examples of this could include violence related to custody battles or other distress in a child's family.

If you are confronted with either of these types of situations:

- Avoid confrontation with someone who is armed with a weapon.
- Immediately grab your cell phone (if possible and safe to do so) and take the children to your pre-designated shelter location within your building. Your shelter should have another escape route in case you need it.
- Lock down the shelter location when you get there: lock doors, cover windows if safe to do so, turn the lights down, and keep everyone away from windows.
- **Call 9-1-1** to report the incident if it started on your property or if you think police are not aware of it already. Follow their instructions or instructions from other responders who arrive on the scene.
- Try to keep the children as quiet and calm as possible.

- Tune in to your battery-operated radio for updates and to find out when it is safe to leave the shelter.
- Contact the children's parents/guardians when the danger has passed.

Section 3: Emergency planning resource links

This section contains links to additional information about disaster planning and response.

- Minnesota Ready is a statewide initiative designed to help Minnesota residents get organized with personal and family preparedness in the event of a major emergency. Further information is available online at https://www.ready.gov/minnesota
- Child Care Aware of Minnesota is a statewide network of community agencies that helps families find quality child care and supports the professional growth of child care providers. Child Care Aware offers providers access to trainings, grants, scholarships, and coaching to help them keep their skills current and build successful careers. Visit www.childcareawaremn.org or call toll free (888) 291-9811.
- To find your regional emergency manager, go to: https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/about/Pages/regions.aspx, or check the phone book for the number of your county government office to be referred.
- To find your county public health agency, go to http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/opi/gov/find/or check the phone book for the number of your county government office.
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), found in some locations. See Association of Minnesota Counties at http://www.mncounties.org/aboutmnc/counties/county_websites.php or call your county emergency manager (see above).
- *Caring for Our Children: National Health and Safety Performance Standards, Guidelines for Early Care and Education Programs*, 3rd Edition http://cfoc.nrckids.org/
    - Standard 9.2.4.3 Disaster Planning, Training, and Communication http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/9.2.4.3
    - Standard 9.2.4.4 Written Plan for Seasonal and Pandemic Influenza http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/9.2.4.4
    - Standard 9.2.4.5 Emergency and Evacuation Drills/Exercise Policy http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView.cfm?StdNum=9.2.4.5&
    - Standard9.2.4.6 Use of Daily Roster During Evacuation Drills http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/9.2.4.6
    - Standard 9.4.1.16 Evacuation and Shelter-in-Place Drill Record http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/9.4.1.16
    - Standard 3.4.3.1 Emergency Procedures http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/3.4.3.1

  - Standard 3.4.3.2. Use of Fire Extinguishers http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/3.4.3.2
  - Standard 3.4.3.3. Response to Fire and Burns http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/3.4.3.3
  - Standard 4.9.0.8 Supply of Food and Water for Disasters http://cfoc.nrckids.org/StandardView/4.9.0.8
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Emergency Preparedness and Response page at http://www.bt.cdc.gov/
- Checklist for Emergency Plan, State of Pennsylvania http://www.ecels-healthychildcarepa.org/resources/resource-list-by-topic/item/153-emergency-plan-checklist
- Head Start Resources: https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/tta-system/health/ep
- Child Care Emergency Tool Box from the General Services Administration: https://www.gsa.gov/cdnstatic/GSAChildCareEmergencyPreparednessToolbox_June_2014.pdf
- Metropolitan Emergency Managers' Association and its publication *Determining Severe Weather Shelter Areas* at http://www.severeweather.state.mn.us/Documents/TornadoShelterAreaDetermination.pdf
- Minnesota Department of Health at http://www.health.state.mn.us/index.html
- Minnesota Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Severe Weather information at http://www.severeweather.state.mn.us/
- National Weather Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) at http://www.weather.gov/
- North Carolina's Emergency Plan Template available at http://ncchildcare.dhhs.state.nc.us/pdf_forms/evacuation_childcare_providers.pdf
- NOAA weather radio at http://www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr
- Red Cross at http://www.redcross.org/
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, pandemic flu at Flu.gov
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA): Tips for Talking With and Helping Children and Youth Cope After a Disaster or Traumatic Event http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content//SMA12-4732/SMA12-4732.pdf
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: http://www.nctsn.org/
- The National Child Traumatic Stress Network: Secondary Trauma and Child Welfare Staff: Guidance for Supervisors and Administrators http://www.nctsn.org/sites/default/files/assets/pdfs/sts_cw_final.pdf

Section 4: Prepare an emergency plan

You can use the Child Care Emergency Plan form to describe procedures and actions you and other caregivers will take during and after an emergency to keep the children in your care safe.

The Child Care Emergency Plan form provides space for you to prepare the following information:

- Procedures for an evacuation, relocation, and shelter-in-place/lockdown
- Designating a relocation site and evacuation route
- Procedures for notifying a child's parent or legal guardian of the evacuation or shelter-in-place/lockdown
- Procedures for reunification with families
- Procedures for storing a child's medically necessary medicine that facilitates easy removal during an evacuation
- Procedures for continuing operations during and after a crisis
- Procedures for communicating with local emergency management officials, law enforcement officials, or other appropriate state or local authorities

Instructions: How to use the Child Care Emergency Plan form

State law requires the following providers to use the Child Care Emergency Plan form to create an emergency preparedness plan: (1) licensed child care centers (Minn. Stat. 245A.41, Subd. 3), (2) licensed family child care providers (Minn. Stat. 245A.51, Subd. 3), and (3) certified child care centers (Minn. Stat. 245H.15). Please refer back to other sections of the Keeping Kids Safe planning guide for guidance in creating your emergency preparedness plan.

You can find the Child Care Emergency Plan form online.

Update your emergency plan at least annually to ensure it reflects the most up-to-date information, which will be critical during an emergency. You should be prepared to take your emergency plan with you in instances of evacuation and/or relocation.

Below is additional information and instructions about different sections in the Child Care Emergency Plan form.

Provider Information

This should include your basic contact information, including an emergency phone number that parents/guardians, emergency managers, or others can use to contact you in case of an emergency.

Shelter-in-Place/Lockdown Procedures

This section describes your plans for sheltering-in-place. You should identify at least one location within the building that would provide a safe and comfortable place for caregivers and children to be when an emergency requires shelter-in-place. This should also include how emergency responders and parents/guardians will be contacted and a plan for having access to an emergency kit.

Evacuation and Relocation Procedures

This section should detail how you will respond if an emergency requires leaving the building. You should identify exits from the building and different routes away from the building and specifically state how infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities or medical conditions will be evacuated. You should also include a plan for notifying emergency authorities, contacting parents/guardians, and ensuring emergency kits are available and taken with when evacuating.

You should contact at least one site and develop an agreement about when and how the relocation site would be used. The description should include which relocation sites will be used during different types of emergencies.

Parent/Guardian Reunification Procedures

This should describe how children and parents/guardians will be reunited after an emergency. You should describe when and how parents/guardians will be notified about the status and location of children and how parent/guardian contact information will be maintained. This section also provides details about the people to whom a child can be released.

Continuing Operation Procedures

In the period during and after a crisis, it is important to have a designated procedure for what will occur. This part should detail how you will continue operations during and after an emergency.

Law Enforcement Agencies

This should include the name and contact information for your city and county public safety team. If your city does not have an emergency manager, the county emergency manager will be your primary contact for emergency management planning. To find your emergency manager, go to https://dps.mn.gov/divisions/hsem/contact/Pages/county-emergency-managers.aspx.

You can also call your city or county offices to find contact information for local police and emergency managers. Most cities in the metro area have a designated emergency manager, as do many larger cities outside of the metro area.

Utility and General Resource Numbers

This should be completed with general emergency contact information. The phone numbers for utility companies are available on your utility bills and the companies' websites. The phone number for post-crisis mental health hotlines, by county, are available at http://mn.gov/dhs/people-we-serve/children-and-families/health-care/mental- health/resources/crisis-contacts.jsp.

Licensing Information

If you are licensed or certified, include contact information for your state or county licensor.

Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) Information

If you participate in the Child Care Assistance Program as a provider, this should include contact information for your CCAP agency/agencies.

Identification of Hazards

Use this section to identify the risk of certain hazards occurring, the impact that a hazard could have if it did occur, and how you would continue operating during and after the emergency.

Child Emergency Contact Information

You should collect each child's emergency contact information and keep it with your emergency kit(s). Licensed child care centers and family child care providers already collect this information from parents/guardians upon enrollment.