MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

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AIR QUALITY INDEX (AQI) AND YOU

What is the Air Quality Index (AQI)?
- The Air Quality Index (AQI) measures the level of air pollutants
- The higher the AQI, the poorer the air quality
- Poor air quality causes health problems and makes existing ones worse

Who is at Most Risk?
- Young children
- The elderly
- People with heart lung problems
- Asthmatics
- Smokers
- People who work or exercise outdoors

Possible Health Problems:
- Eye, nose and throat irritations
- Coughing, wheezing, shortness of breath
- Lower resistance to infections
- Heart or lung problems may get worse

How Can You Protect Your Health?
- Take steps to improve your air quality
- Be aware of the daily AQI
- Reduce outdoor activities whenever AQI is a concern

How Can You Improve Air Quality?
DO: walk, ride a bike, car-pool, take public transit, keep your car engine in good condition

REDUCE: use of the car, stop unnecessary vehicle idling; oil-based paints and glues, pesticides, gas-powered small engines

For day to day Air Quality Advisory Reports go to:
Ontario Ministry of Environment at
http://www.airqualityontario.com/index.cfm

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What is the Air Quality Index

The Air Quality Index (AQI) is an indicator of air quality, based on hourly pollutant measurements of some or all of the six most common air pollutants: sulphur dioxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, total reduced sulphur compounds, carbon monoxide and fine particulate matter.

Where does Smog come from?

The word smog is actually a combination of the words smoke and fog. Smog is the most visible form of air pollution. It is a brownish-yellow hazy cloud caused when heat and sunlight react with various pollutants emitted from industry, cars, pesticides and oil-based home products. Smog forms when heat and sunlight react with gases and fine particles in the air. Smog can be seen as a brownish-yellow, hazy cloud over the city on hot summer days. Smog can affect outlying suburbs and rural areas as well as big cities.
Smog is a year-round problem but most smog watches and alerts occur from May to September, especially on hot summer days.

AQI advisories, and the health messages associated with the advisories, are reported to the public and the media at set intervals each day. With this information, individuals can then decide how to reduce the risk to their health, as well as reduce their own personal contribution to air pollution.

Advisories warning of extreme conditions, particularly during the summer months, are more commonly known as "smog alerts".

Some of the advice you are likely to hear during smog alerts include:
• Listen to the radio or watch television reports for information about air quality and smog advisories. Plan your day based on this information
• Consider limiting or rescheduling physical outdoor activities on smog advisory days when air pollution is more harmful than usual
• Reduce exposure to motor vehicle exhaust by limiting physical activity near heavy traffic areas, particularly at rush hour
• Stop unnecessary vehicle idling. This is an easy way to help improve the air quality in your community
To obtain smog alert information:
• Visit the MOE's air quality Web site at www.airqualityontario.com for current AQI readings and air quality forecasts
• Call the MOE's Air Quality Index phone line at 1-800-387-7768
To obtain AQI readings in French, call 1-800-221-8852

For more information about Air Quality
please contact the Middlesex-London Health Unit at
(519) 663-5317 Ext. 2300
or visit www.healthunit.com

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Alcohol Hand Rubs and Hand Hygiene

Questions & Answers

Alcohol hand rubs, also known as alcohol hand sanitizers (liquid, gels, foams or towelettes) are one of the newer weapons in the fight against harmful microorganisms ('germs') that can make us sick. Alcohol kills bacteria and most viruses. Soap and water have not been replaced, but now have a partner in the war against germs.

What is 'hand hygiene'?
Hand hygiene is a term that means a process for the removal of both dirt *and* germs from the hands. This can be accomplished by using soap and running water and the six-step method (wet hands, apply soap, lather and rub for at least 20 seconds, rinse, dry and turn off the tap with the towel) **or** by using an alcohol hand rub.

Aren't hand rubs specifically for use in health care settings?
Alcohol hand rubs have been proven to increase hand hygiene in health care settings. Most health care settings now have alcohol hand rubs readily available for use by visitors and patients, as well as staff. Since bacteria and viruses can be picked up from surfaces such as handrails, doorknobs, and elevator buttons, and can even be acquired from shaking hands, it is a good idea to have them widely available in many public settings, including workplaces.

Can a hand rub replace hand washing?
Research has shown that the effectiveness of alcohol hand rub is significantly lowered if the hands are visibly soiled. The presence of dirt, grease, or food on your hands is an important consideration in the decision of whether or not to use an alcohol hand rub. If you can see dirt on your hands, it is important to wash them with soap and water. If soap and water are not available, then use of an alcohol hand rub is better than nothing at all. However, in the absence of any visible dirt or grease, hand rubs are as effective as washing with soap and water.

What is the difference between hand sanitizer and soap?
Hand rubs are sometimes referred to as waterless hand cleaners. They work by killing germs that are present on your hands. Soap does not kill germs; however it has a cleaning effect that, when combined with running water and rubbing, allows for the physical removal of germs.

Are hand rubs more effective than washing your hands with running water and soap?
No, traditional hand washing (running water and soap) is just as effective if done properly. Hand rubs enhance our ability to prevent infection because they can be put in high-risk areas, such as where people socialize, or at the entrance to buildings where hand washing may not be readily available.

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Why promote hand rubs?
Hand rubs are effective in helping to prevent the spread of infections. We know that in studies where people regularly perform hand hygiene, the incidence of infections is lowered.

Why use *alcohol* hand rubs? Aren't there other formulations available that do not use alcohol?
Alcohol hand rubs and towelettes (minimum 60% alcohol) are the most effective hand sanitizer products on the market. Alcohol hand rubs have the broadest range of effectiveness across the different types of viruses and bacteria. Many non-alcohol hand rubs on the market contain a quaternary ammonia compound that is NOT effective against several common germs including rhinovirus (a cause of the common cold) and norovirus (a common cause of diarrhea and vomiting).

How do you decide where to locate hand rub dispensers?
Wall-mounted hand dispensers should be located at a height of between 36 to 48 inches above the floor at the following locations:

- entrances to buildings
- reception areas
- staff cafeterias and lunch rooms
- areas where staff or the public greet and meet

Are alcohol hand rubs safe?
Yes, alcohol hand rubs are safe. As with all such products, proper use is important since alcohol is flammable. Be sure to always allow the hand rub to dry before you touch anything electrical and before you come into contact with an open flame (such as when lighting a cigarette). This will take no longer than about 5 to 15 seconds. Store personal bottles of alcohol hand rub in a manner that ensures they do not come into contact with an open flame. Following this advice will minimize the small potential safety hazard that exists.

Are they safe for children?
While safe to use as directed, ingestion of this product by children poses a poisoning risk. Alcohol hand rubs should be kept well out of reach of young children, and used only with adult supervision.

I've heard that alcohol hand rubs dry out skin.
People will have different tolerances for these products. The newer products are gentler and contain more moisturizers than the original products. Some people may prefer to use hand lotion more frequently when using these products. Others may prefer to use hand washing with soap and water as their main method of hand hygiene.

How can I improve my hand hygiene in public settings?
Small bottles of alcohol hand rub can be safely carried with you.

What is the proper way to use the hand rub?
Pump a thumbnail sized amount of product into one of your hands. Rub hands together vigorously until the solution is dry. Remember your nails, and all sides of your fingers and your wrist.

What other things can I do to prevent infections?
Ensure that you are immunized. Ensure that you are getting enough rest, good nutrition and exercise.
Do not smoke. Stay home when you are ill. When you cough or sneeze, use a tissue and discard it right away. If one isn't available try to sneeze or cough into your shoulder or elbow.
Avoid eating, touching your face (including your eyes) or placing your fingers in your mouth without first washing or sanitizing your hands.
Consider alternatives to the 'handshake' greeting or be sure to perform hand hygiene afterwards.

If you have any questions, please contact the Communicable Disease and Sexual Health Services at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or go to www. healthunit.com

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ASBESTOS

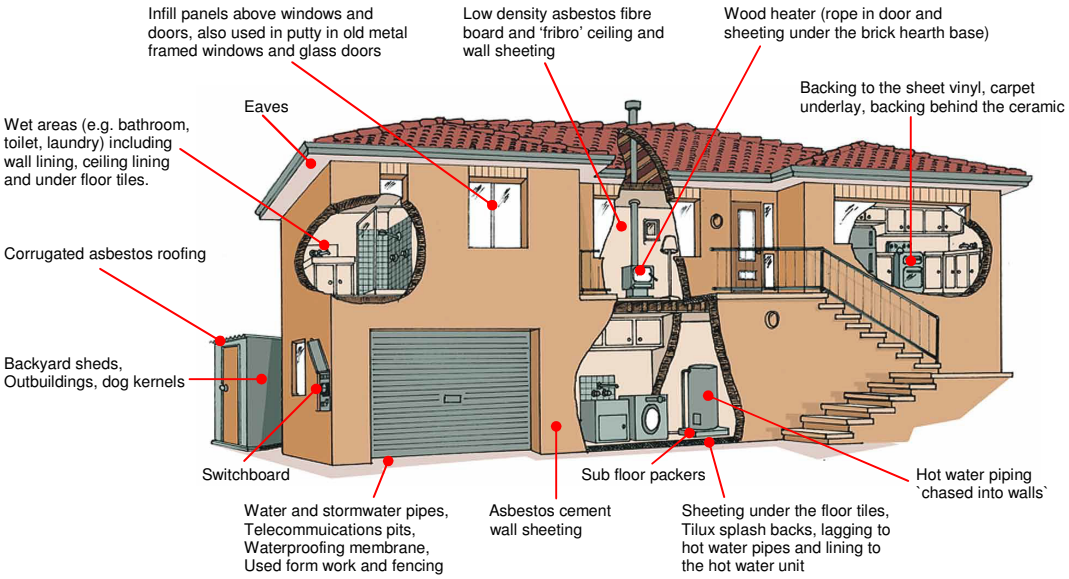
(Management of Asbestos in Cases of Emergency)

What is Asbestos?

Asbestos is a naturally occurring fibrous mineral that is found in rock formations around the world. Because it is strong, durable, and resistant to heat and most chemicals, it was used widely as a building material in the past. Currently, asbestos-containing materials are only used under the *Hazardous Products Act* which ensures that products are better encapsulated and sealed to minimize the escape of fibres.

Where is asbestos found?

The use of asbestos has been decreasing steadily since early 1980s. However, buildings constructed before 1980 are likely to contain asbestos; and when these older buildings are disturbed, there is a higher chance for asbestos to be released into the air. Items that may contain asbestos are shown in the following diagram:



SOURCE: Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Queensland Government

What health problems can it cause?

Asbestos is of a higher risk when inhaled than when ingested. There is no significant health risk if asbestos-containing materials like roofing shingles, ceiling and floor tiles, and insulators remain intact. However once they are disturbed, asbestos can be released into the air resulting in potential health problems. While asbestos has no immediate health effects, prolonged exposure may cause the following illnesses:

- **Mesothelioma**: a rare cancer on the tissues that line the lungs and/or abdomen.
- **Asbestosis**: scarring of the lung tissues, which makes breathing difficult.
- **Lung cancer**

www.healthunit.com

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Symptoms may start to appear long after the asbestos exposure took place, sometimes more than 50 years after the exposure, depending on an individual's health. The longer someone is exposed to asbestos, the higher the risk of developing illness.

How do I minimize the risk of asbestos after a disaster?

In cases of disasters like fires, tornadoes, floods, snow storms, ice storms and blizzards, buildings containing asbestos may become damaged or destroyed. If the handling of asbestos-containing materials is necessary, please be aware of the following recommendations:

- A qualified professional's assessment is strongly recommended before entering any building to make sure it is safe.
- Wear long sleeve shirts and long pants, and any appropriate protective equipment to prevent inhalation.
- It is recommended to wear National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) approved N-100, P-100, and R-100 respirators.
- Keep other people and pets away, and seal off the area.
- Before cleaning, hose down the area or clean with wet mop to limit dust exposure.
- Do not damage or break the asbestos-containing material during clean up.
- Wash or dispose of clothing that has been exposed to asbestos.
- If vacuuming, use a High Efficiency Particulate Air (HEPA)-filter equipped vacuum.
- Remove and dispose of all asbestos-containing materials in accordance with local waste disposal bylaws.

Please note that NIOSH approved N-95 respirators
DO NOT provide adequate protection against asbestos exposure.

What do I do if I have been exposed to asbestos?

- Take a shower, and wash exposed areas of the body.
- Asbestos-related illnesses usually develop with prolonged exposure to asbestos, therefore it is not likely you would show immediate symptoms.
- Seek medical attention if you are concerned about your medical condition.

For more information contact **the Middlesex-London Health Unit's Environmental Health Department** at (519) 663-5317 ext. 2300 or visit www.healthunit.com

Information obtained from:

Ministry of Labour
(http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english)

Health Canada
(http://hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vséenvironéasbestos-amiante-eng.php)

Huron County Health Unit
(http://www.huroncounty.ca/newsroom/AsbestosFactSheet_24Aug11.pdf)

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
(http://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/co/maho/yohoyohe/inaiqu/inaiqu_001.cfm)

Environmental Protection Agency (United States)
(http://www.epa.gov/asbestos/)

Department of Justice and Attorney-General, Queensland Government
(http://www.deir.qld.gov.au/workplace/subjects/asbestos/index.htm)

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BATS AND RABIES

What is Rabies?

Rabies is a disease caused by a virus that attacks mammals' central nervous system, and is spread by contact with the saliva of an infected animal. This could happen during a bite or by contact with contaminated saliva on broken skin or moist tissues of the mouth, nose or eyes. An animal that has contracted rabies will die. If left untreated, rabies is fatal to humans.

Bats and Rabies

Bats are beneficial (they eat over three times their body weight in insects every night), but they have been known to cause rabies in humans. Rabies can be confirmed only in a laboratory. Any bat that is active by day, is found in a place where bats are not usually seen, or is unable to fly, is far more likely than others to be rabid. These bats are often easily approached, but should never be touched.

What is a Bat Exposure?

The bat's small teeth may leave marks that are not easily seen and the bite may not be felt. For this reason there are times in which you should seek medical advice, even though there is no sign of a bite wound.

EXPOSURE

- ✓ A bat lands on a person.
- ✓ Infectious material (such as saliva) from a bat gets into your eyes, nose mouth or a wound.
- ✓ A sleeping person awakes and finds a bat in the room.
- ✓ A bat is found in the room of an unattended child, or person who could not report whether he or she had direct contact with the bat (e.g. intoxicated, mentally impaired).

NOT AN EXPOSURE

- ✗ A bat flying nearby.
- ✗ A bat (or bats) seen in your attic.
- ✗ Bat guano (feces), blood, or urine.
- ✗ Touching an object that a bat had contacted.

What To Do If an Exposure to a Bat Occurs

If a bat bites you or if saliva from a bat gets into your eyes, nose, mouth or a wound – wash the area thoroughly, and get medical advice immediately. Whenever possible, the bat should be safely captured and sent to the laboratory for testing. Any bat exposure should be reported to the Health Unit at **519-663-5317, ext. 2300**, after hours or on weekends please call **519-675-7523**. Notify the Health Unit if you have trapped the bat and arrangements will be made to submit the bat to the Federal Laboratory for rabies testing. If the bat is found to be rabid or if the bat is not available for testing, exposed persons will be advised to get rabies vaccination.

How to Safely Capture a Bat

If a bat is present in your home and you cannot rule out the possibility of exposure, leave the bat alone and contact an animal control agency or the Health Unit for advice. If professional help is not available, use precautions to capture the bat safely.

You will need:

- ❑ Leather work gloves (put them on)
- ❑ Small box or coffee can
- ❑ Piece of cardboard
- ❑ Tape

When the bat lands, approach it slowly, while wearing the gloves, and place the box or can over it. Slide the cardboard under the container to trap the bat inside. Tape the cardboard to the container, and punch small breathing holes in the cardboard. Call the Health Unit to make arrangements for collection.

If you see a bat(s) in your home and you are sure that no human or pet exposure has occurred, close off the area to the rest of the house. Open doors and/or windows to the outside, and ensure the bat(s) leave(s).

Bats In Homes

Bats that fly into homes are often lost youngsters looking for escape. They often will leave on their own through a window open to the outside while blocking access to the rest of the house. Bats are not aggressive, however will bite if grabbed.

BAT-PROOFING YOUR HOME

Prevent bats from roosting in attics of buildings by covering outside entry points. Observe where the bats exit at dusk and keep them from re-entering by hanging loose plastic sheeting or bird netting over these areas. After the bats have left, the openings can be permanently sealed. Most bats leave in the fall or winter to hibernate, so these are the best times to "bat-proof" your home.

- ❑ Carefully examine your home for holes that might allow bats to enter. Any opening larger than a dime should be caulked.
- ❑ Use window screens and chimney caps, fill electrical and plumbing holes with stainless steel wool or caulking.
- ❑ Ensure doors to the outside close tightly.

For assistance with bat-proofing your home contact an animal control or wildlife conservation agency.

How to Prevent Rabies

- ✓ Wash any wound from an animal thoroughly and see a physician immediately.
- ✓ Keep your pet's rabies vaccination up to date.
- ✓ Bat-proof your house and cottage.
- ✓ Have all dead, sick or easily captured bats tested for rabies if exposure to people or pets occurs.
- ✗ Do not handle unfamiliar animals.

Where can I learn more about bats? Online at: www.batcon.org/
Where can I learn more about rabies? Online at: www.health.gov.on.ca

For more information contact Environmental Health at 519-663-5317 ext. 2300
Other Health Unit resources are available at the health unit or online at **www.healthunit.com**

Information adapted from:

Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care website. Accessed January 7, 2004. *"Rabies"*
www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/pub_menus/pub_rabies.html © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2002

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Boil Water Advisory Recommendations

What are the reasons for a "boil water advisory"?

There are different reasons for issuing a boil water advisory:

- A boil water advisory is based on information other than bacteriological examination indicating that the water is not safe to drink. (e.g., the lack or absence of disinfection residual in the drinking water.)
- A boil water advisory may be based on bacteriological (microbial) examination, including the finding of bacteria or parasites.
- A boil water advisory may follow the occurrence of an outbreak of illness in the community that has been linked to consumption of the water.

The extent of restriction on water use depends on the situation and the reason for issuing a boil water advisory. Always follow your own health unit's recommendations on water use.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS ON HOW TO USE THE WATER IF A BOIL WATER ADVISORY HAS BEEN ISSUED IN YOUR COMMUNITY.

How do I use water when the boil water advisory has been issued?

The water should NOT be used for drinking, making infant formula and juices, cooking, making ice, washing fruits, vegetables or brushing teeth. For these purposes, boiled water or bottled water should be used. The water should be brought to a rapid rolling boil and boiled for 1 minute. If there are children in the home, place the pot on the back burner to avoid scalds. Boil only as much water in a pot as you can comfortably lift without spilling. Discard all ice made previously and disinfect the ice cube trays. Make ice using boiled, cooled water.

Can I take a bath?

Adults and teens may shower with untreated water as long as no water is swallowed. Older children could also be given a shower with a hand held showerhead, avoiding the face. Younger children should be sponge-bathed instead of bathing in a tub because they are likely to swallow tub water.

Can I use the water for handwashing?

If the boil water advisory has been issued as a precaution and there is no outbreak of human illness, there is no need for additional hand disinfection with bleach solution or alcohol using the measures described below.

If the boil water advisory has been issued because of an outbreak, water can be used for handwashing after the following emergency water treatment: Place 1.5 oz (about 45ml) liquid household bleach in 10 gallons (45 litres) water. Mix and let stand for at least 10 minutes prior to use.

How else can I disinfect my hands?

You can use alcohol-based hand disinfectants, containing more than 60% alcohol. These products are widely used in the health care setting after washing hands or in situations when water is not available. The wet wipes used for cleaning babies at diaper change are not effective for disinfecting hands and should not be used for this purpose.

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I have a dishwasher. Is it safe to use?

If your dishwasher has a hot setting, it safely disinfects dishes. If your dishwasher does not have a hot setting, after finishing the cycle, soak dishes for 1 minute in a solution of 1oz (30 ml) of bleach mixed with 3 gallons of lukewarm water (13.5 litres). Let dishes air dry.

I wash dishes by hand. How do I disinfect them?

You could use boiled water for washing dishes. Dishes washed in soap and hot water can also be rinsed in boiled water or disinfected with the following bleach solution. Mix 1 oz. (about 30 ml) bleach in to 3 gallons (13.5 litres) of water at room temperature for at least 1 minute. Let dishes air dry.

What is disinfection?

Disinfection is a cleaning process, which destroys most disease-causing microorganisms (pathogens).

Should I change the way I am doing laundry?

No, continue doing laundry the way you usually do.

Is the water safe to fill wading pools for children?

No, the water is not safe to use in wading pools. Water usually gets into the mouths of small children, providing a possibility for infection.

I have a water filtration device installed. Does this make the water safe for drinking or cooking?

No. Filtered water should also be brought to a rolling boil for 1 minute before drinking or using it for cooking.

My doctor told me I am immunocompromised. What should I do ?

Always follow your physician's and dietitian's advice. You might be advised to use bottled water or to boil water for drinking/cooking, even in the absence of a boil-water advisory.

How does the Medical Officer of Health decide when to "lift" a boil water advisory?

The Ontario Drinking Water Standards (ODWS) state that the medical officer of health should continue the boil water advisory until the objectives in the ODWS are no longer exceeded in two consecutive sets of samples taken from all parts of the distribution system that has been affected. The objectives address issues that can affect health, such as the presence of E. coli. The medical officer of health may choose not to lift the boil water advisory even if two acceptable samples are obtained.

What should I do after the boil water advisory is lifted?

Run cold water faucets for 1 minute before using the water. Run drinking fountains for 1 minute before using the water. Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle. Drain and refill hot water heaters set below 45°C (normal setting is 60°C).

For more information contact Environmental Health at 663-5317 ext. 2300.

Information obtained from: Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care website. Accessed October 8, 2003 “How to use water safely during a boil water advisory". www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/foodsafe/watersafety.html

January 2004

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

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Carbon Monoxide

CO is a colorless, odorless and tasteless gas produced by incomplete combustion of fossil fuels such as wood, gas, oil or coal. Sources of CO at home include furnaces, water heaters, clothes dryers, wood stoves, ovens, motor vehicle exhaust, lawn mowers and other appliances that operate by burning fuel.

Why is CO a concern?

CO is a health concern because when you breathe CO it effects the red blood cells ability to carry oxygen and blocks the absorption of oxygen into the bloodstream. The brain is extremely sensitive to oxygen starvation. Because you cannot see, smell or taste CO, poisoning can happen to anyone, anytime, anywhere.

What are the symptoms of CO poisoning?

Low Concentrations - tiredness, headaches, nausea, dizziness, shortness of breath on exertion
Longer exposure time or higher Concentrations - severe headache, mental confusion, impaired vision and hearing, loss of strength and muscle control, collapse on exertion
Extreme Concentrations - unconsciousness, coma, death
If you experience any of the symptoms of CO, **leave the home and move into fresh air as quickly as possible.** Seek medical attention immediately if anyone shows symptoms of CO poisoning. Older persons, children, people with heart or respiratory conditions, and pets may be particularly sensitive to CO and may feel the effects more quickly.

How can I protect myself?

There are a number of ways to protect yourself and your family from CO poisoning:
Carbon monoxide detectors - The best way to recognize the presence of CO in your home before a serious situation develops is to have a CO detector in any work area that may present a hazard and outside sleeping areas. There are several types of CO detectors available to purchase. The Carbon Monoxide Safety Association recommends only CO detectors bearing the CSA International CAN/CGA 6.19 or the Underwriters' Laboratories (UL) 2034 standard. Follow the manufacturer's instructions to install and routinely test the detector to ensure proper functioning.
Annual inspections and service - Have a qualified service technician inspect and clean all fuel-burning appliances, venting systems and chimneys.
Operate outdoor appliances safely - Do not operate charcoal or propane BBQ's, portable camp stoves, gas generators, or other gas-powered appliances indoors. Never leave the motor running in a vehicle parked inside of a closed garage always have the garage door open to let fresh air in. Always keep the door connecting the garage to the house closed if your automobile is running. Never run a motor vehicle, generator, pressure washer or any gas-powered engine outside of an open window where exhaust can vent into an enclosed space.

What should I do if the CO detector alarm sounds?

If a CO detector alarms sounds in your home, open all doors and windows to ventilate. If the alarm continues, stay out of your home and contact the local gas utility or a qualified heating contractor to check your fuel-burning appliances.

For more information on carbon monoxide, please contact the London Fire Services at 661-4565 or go to www.city.london.on.ca

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Cleaning and Disinfection of Flooded Premises

The following procedure is recommended for the satisfactory cleaning and disinfecting of all premises, which have been flooded.

1. After the water has been removed from the premises, all mud and debris should be removed by scraping and washing the area.
2. This material should be placed at least 50 feet down grade from any well.
3. The premises and furniture should then be thoroughly washed and disinfected.

DISINFECTANTS

For walls, floors and cellars, disinfect by thoroughly washing and brushing with a sodium hypochlorite solution. This solution can be prepared by adding 1 tablespoon of household bleach to an 8-quart pail of water (the directions on the package should be followed when using other chlorine compounds).

FOODS

Since foods exposed to flood waters may constitute a health hazard, the following notes are intended as a guide to disposing of contaminated foods.

CANNED FOODS

Canned goods should be closely checked for “leakers” and “swells”. Particular attention should be paid to seams and joints for signs of corrosion. Home-preserved fruits in jars and sealers which show evidence of contamination around the tops should be discarded. Although many of these jars may be safe, there is a danger, which may not be easy to see.

SOFT FOODS

Soft foods, including all kinds of meats and dairy products, should be discarded, if there is evidence of contact with flood water.

WRAPPED FOODS

Foods which have been wrapped in moisture-proof wrappers should be examined for breaks in the wrapper. Intact wrappers should be removed and the product re-wrapped. Where there is evidence of moisture the product should be regarded as unsafe.

Food-handling equipment should be thoroughly scoured and washed and then treated with an effective disinfecting solution. Chlorine not less than 100 parts per million and preferably up to 400 parts per million (1 to 4 tablespoons of household bleach/gallon of water) is satisfactory, or immersion in boiling water for at least one minute. In all cases a generous safety margin should be allowed.

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SEPTIC TANKS

Septic tanks in areas which have been flooded should not be operated again until the disposal field has dried and in certain instances until the tank itself ahs been checked. If early drying does not re-establish drainage through the septic tanks, obtain the assistance of the authorities having jurisdiction.

GENERAL CLEAN-UP

Following the clean-up of buildings, attention must be turned to the removal of flood-borne material form yards. All materials to be discarded should be done through municipal garbage removal where possible or by a commercial waste removal service. Particular effort should be made to remove all filth, that might, in warm weather serve as a breeding place for flies.

DRUGS, MEDICINES AND ANIMAL FOOD

Drugs and medicines that have been in contact with flood water should be destroyed. No attempt should be made to replace loosened labels as this is dangerous. All unlabeled drugs should be destroyed. Do not leave them where they may be found by children.

If in doubt about animal foods, contact your Agricultural Representative or the Department of Agriculture.

ELECTRICAL HAZARDS

No attempt should be made to try out or to operate any electrical appliances until the wiring in your home or building has been inspected and found safe.

HEATING HAZARDS

Three main hazards exist from domestic or other heating systems following flood damage. These hazards are: explosion, suffocation and fire. Householders are, therefore, warned to take every precaution to see that the heating system is safe before resuming its use.

For more information call the Environmental Health Division of the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 663-5317, ext. 2300 or go to the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to help organize your clean-up.

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Cold Storage of Foods - How Long Should I Keep It?

Product	Variety	Refrigerator (4°C)	Freezer (-18°C)
Eggs	Fresh, in shell	3 weeks	Do not freeze.
	Raw yolks, whites	2-4 days	4 months
	Hard-cooked	1 week	Do not freeze well.
	Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitute - opened	3 days	Do not freeze.
	Liquid pasteurized eggs or egg substitute - unopened	10 days	4 months
Mayonnaise	commercial (refrigerate after opening)	2 months	Do not freeze.
TV Dinners, Frozen Casseroles	All brands	Keep frozen until ready to serve.	3-4 months
Deli and vacuum-packed Products Store prepared (or homemade)	Egg, chicken, tuna, ham, macaroni, salads	2-3 days	These products do r freeze well.
	Stuffed pork and lamb chops, stuffed chicken breasts	1 day	These products do r freeze well.
	Store-cooked convenience meals	1-2 days	These products do r freeze well.
	Commercial brand vacuum-packed dinners	2 weeks unopened	These products do r freeze well.
Soups and Stews	Vegetable or meat-added	3-4 days	2-3 months
Hamburger, Ground and Stew Meats	Hamburger and stew meats	1-2 days	3-4 months
	Ground turkey, veal, pork, lamb and mixture of them	1-2 days	3-4 months
Hot Dogs	Hot dogs, opened package Hot dogs unopened package	1 week 2 weeks	In freezer wrap, 1-2 months
Lunch Meats	Lunch meats opened Lunch meats unopened	3-5 days 2 weeks	In freezer wrap, 1-2 months
Seafood	Fish, shellfish and other seafood	1-2 days	4-6 months

For more information contact Environmental Health Services at the Middlesex-London Health Unit, 663-5317 ext. 2300.

Information taken from:
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care website. Accessed November 10, 2003.
Safe Food Handling. www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/foodsafe/foodhandl.html

January 2004

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CORRECT DISHWASHING PROCEDURE

The Three Sink Method

Scrape and Pre-rinse

First Sink

WASH

- Use Warm Water and Detergent

Second Sink

RINSE

- Clean Water
- Temperature of Water NOT LOWER THAN 43°C (110°F)

Third Sink

SANITIZE

For at least 45 seconds using:

- Hot Water at least 77°C (170°F)

OR

- A Solution NOT LESS THAN 24°C (75°F) of ONE of these:

100 PPM CHLORINE	200 PPM QUARTERNARY AMMONIUM	25 PPM IODINE

Air Dry and Storage

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT
www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Dry Ice Safety

Dry ice has the ability to keep things frozen or cool during extended power outages. Dry ice is a chemical compound and is subject to WHIMIS regulation. Prior to its use ensure that you and your staff are aware of its proper handling, and that appropriate safety equipment is in place.

The amount of dry ice needed to cool a refrigerator or freezer will depend on the size of the unit. Discuss your specific needs with your dry ice supplier. Dry ice is not appropriate for every situation.

There are significant safety risks associated with the use of dry ice. Serious injury and even death can occur if the product is not used correctly.

Safety Considerations:

Wear hand protection when touching dry ice. Dry ice is extremely cold and must be handled with care. Direct skin contact with dry ice can result in a severe frostbite or burn. Always wear insulated gloves; the thicker the better. Safety goggles/face shield, long sleeved shirts, long pants and shoes are recommended.

Use in a well-ventilated space. As dry ice melts (sublimates) it releases Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) gas. In an enclosed space, the CO_2 gas replaces the available oxygen in the air and can lead to asphyxiation.
If dry ice has been in an enclosed space like a car, room, walk-in refrigerator or freezer, open the doors and allow time to ventilate.
For walk-in refrigerator or freezer entry, use a buddy system, with one person outside at all times. If you start to breathe quickly, or your lips or nail beds turn blue, leave the area immediately.

Do not store dry ice in a sealed container. As the CO_2 is released from the dry ice, it will cause the container to expand and possibly explode.

Do not leave dry ice unattended around children or adults with cognitive deficiencies. Dry ice is harmful if consumed and can cause severe burns if handled incorrectly.

Monitor both refrigerator and freezer temperatures closely to ensure that proper temperatures are being maintained. If you are going to use dry ice, it is best to have a business arrangement with a dry ice supplier prior to an emergency power outage.

If you have any questions, please contact the Communicable Disease and Sexual Health Services at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or go to www. healthunit.com

Information Adapted from:
dryiceInfo.com website. Accessed on January 12, 2006.

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FACT SHEET fact sheet

Emergency Detour Routes (EDR)

Ontario's highways carry over eight million drivers and nine million registered vehicles every year. Thousands of businesses rely on highways to move more than $1.2 trillion worth of goods annually to domestic and international markets. The Ministry of Transportation believes that a safe, efficient and integrated transportation system is key to strong communities, economic prosperity and growth.

While Ontario maintains an impressive safety record in North America, incidents occur on provincial highways resulting in delays to the transportation of goods and services and the driving public.

To reduce these delays, the Ministry of Transportation, Ontario Good Roads Association, Ontario Provincial Police, local police and representatives from various municipalities in Ontario formed a task force to develop guidelines and best practices that will allow safe and orderly control of traffic on Emergency Detour Routes (EDRs).

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why do we need Emergency Detour Routes (EDRs)?
To provide drivers with a pre-determined route when a provincial highway is closed.

2. When are emergency highway closures necessary?
These unscheduled closures are required when a highway is physically impassable or when emergency work cannot be performed in traffic.

3. How long will the Emergency Detour Route (EDR) be activated?
The duration of a highway closure will vary depending on the extent and nature of the incident. Most incidents normally require approximately two to three hours to clear.

4. Who decides when the highway should be closed or opened?
The police have the authority to close highways. An officer at the incident will determine when to reopen the highway and deactivate the Emergency Detour Route (EDR).

5. How will I know what route to follow?
Signs will be located on the highway at the start of the Emergency Detour Route (EDR). Signs will be placed along the route that should be followed.

6. I have a large truck carrying an oversized or overweight load. Can I use the Emergency Detour Route (EDR)?
No. Oversized or overweight loads travel under permit-defined routes and are not permitted on any other route. The police will direct you to park in a safe location on the highway until it reopens.

7. I live in an area that the Emergency Detour Route (EDR) goes through. How will I be affected?
While the Emergency Detour Route (EDR) is activated there will be an increase in traffic. This might also include more trucks. Local police or municipal staff might be present to direct traffic at key intersections and monitor the use of the Emergency Detour Route (EDR).

8. How are the Emergency Detour Routes (EDRs) selected?
Emergency Detour Routes (EDRs) are developed by the municipality with the MTO and the police. They are based on several factors including travel time and a route's ability to efficiently accommodate increased traffic volumes.
The application of an EDR may not be necessary when there are limited municipal impacts or low traffic volumes.

Adapted from Ministry of Transportation web site www.mto.gov.on.ca.

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FACT SHEET fact sheet

Extreme Temperature Protocol

There were nine days in the summer of 2005 where the heat and/or humidex readings reached such severe temperatures, where the decision was made to call a Heat Alert and open 'cooling centers' housed in public, air conditioned locations. In the first months of the winter of 2005, there were nine days when the temperature was so very cold that Cold Alert Days were issued. Weather variability, in addition to heat or cold intensity, is the most important factor defining human temperature sensitivity. Extreme heat is a well-known cause of many illnesses and will also exacerbate many pre-existing health conditions, elevating mortality rates. There is no clear medical evidence on what constitutes extreme and potentially harmful cold weather, however, many factors can combine to create potentially harmful situations.

The Extreme Temperature Protocol makes official the practice of issuing Heat Alert Responses and Cold Alert Responses, to inform local agencies, in a coordinated manner, of the forecast of an extreme weather temperature, ensuring that agencies who service and/or support vulnerable persons are informed and protected.

Research and surveys were conducted into the practices of all of the provincial health units, as well as with many of the agencies that regularly support clients who may be adversely affected by severe temperature fluctuations. From this information, Criteria for Initiating an Alert were drafted, and Action Components were identified. Numerous community partners and stakeholders are invited to participate in the Extreme Temperature Network, where the components of Monitoring, Notification, Consultation, Decision, Activation, Communications, Media Notification, Public Education, Agency Staff Education, and Termination were discussed. The members of the Network collectively decided to name the Middlesex-London Health Unit as the lead Authority of this Extreme Temperature Protocol, and the City of London is in the process of incorporating this Protocol as an Annex to the Severe Weather Emergency Plan.

By adopting the Extreme Temperature Protocol as the standard of practice in the summer and winter months, the Health Unit takes the lead role with community partners, increasing visibility, interaction and educational components. Our data bases have been updated and increased in scope, so that the messaging of a severe temperature concern is broadcast to an increased number of associations, schools, service groups, businesses and citizens. Daily monitoring of the Air Quality and Weather Canada websites for forecasts, watches, warnings and other weather declarations occur. Signage has been mailed to all community partners and stakeholders to display publicly when an Alert has been declared. Information-based Fact Sheets are being reviewed and will be redistributed accordingly, and the material is being updated on our website.

The community stakeholders on the Extreme Temperature Network will contribute to the evaluation process of the Heat Alert process or the Cold Alert process by meeting in April and October of each year to assess the strategies. The number of Alerts called each year (based on the set criteria being met) will be tracked each month, as will the number of press releases and attendees to the cooling centers. Surveillance data on weather, hospital admissions, ambulance use, coroner reports, electric and water demand and other outreach efforts may be available, and may eventually become critical to determine the effectiveness of interventions.

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MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Heat-Related Illness

How to Beat the Heat - How to Manage the Heat

Doing too much on a hot day, spending too much time in the sun or staying too long in an overheated place can cause heat-related illnesses.

People suffer most when the body's temperature control system is overloaded. The body normally cools itself by sweating. But under some conditions, sweating just isn't enough. In this case, a person's body temperature rises rapidly, and this situation may damage the brain or other vital organs, and in extreme conditions, may be life threatening.

What affects the body's ability to cool itself during extremely hot weather?

- if the humidity is high, a person's sweat will not evaporate as quickly, preventing the body from releasing heat quickly
- other conditions/situations that can limit the ability to regulate temperature:
  - certain medications
  - people who are overweight
  - poor circulation
  - elderly people and children
  - (0-4 years)
  - fever – body temperature is already elevated due to illness
  - sunburn
  - dehydration
  - drinking alcohol
  - heart disease or respiratory illness
  - exercising vigorously or working strenuously outdoors for prolonged times

WATCH FOR THE SYMPTOMS OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

SYMPTOM	Heat Cramps	Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
Body Temperature	Normal	May be above or below normal	Rising rapidly to 40°C (104°F) and as high as 44°C (111°F)
Pulse	Weak and regular	Weak and regular - thready	Rapid and strong, becoming weaker
Respiration	Normal	Rapid and shallow	Noisy
Consciousness	Conscious	Headache, blurred vision, dizziness and may lose consciousness	Throbbing headache, dizziness, restlessness, unconsciousness, coma
Skin Appearance	Excessive sweating (depletes salt & fluid)	Sweating heavily, pale, cold, clammy	Flushed, hot, dry
Muscular Reaction	Spasms in the extremities and abdomen	Spasms in the extremities and abdomen - may lead to fainting and vomiting	Convulsions, nausea and vomiting

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The Best Defense Is Prevention

It is easier to prevent dehydration and high body temperatures, than to treat them!
Remember to stay cool and use COMMON SENSE!

- Drink plenty of fluids, slowly throughout the day, and more than usual, regardless of activity level. WATER is generally the best choice. If you are exercising, it is important to replace salt and minerals that the body loses through perspiring by choosing sport beverages and small amounts of juice
- Avoid drinks that contain alcohol or caffeine, or large amounts of sugar - they can cause you to lose more fluid
- Avoid very cold drinks - these may cause cramping in the abdomen &/or legs & arms
- Note: if your physician generally limits the amount of fluid you drink, or has you on "water pills", make sure to ask how much fluid you should drink in hot humid weather
- Note: if your physician has prescribed a "salt-restrictive diet", make sure to ask about increasing your salt intake, before using "high-salt" beverages, such as sport drinks
- Note: Some medications can increase the risk of heat-related illness. Certain medications can inhibit perspiration. Examples are Parkinson's Disease medication, tranquilizers, and other medications used for mental illness
- Stay indoors, if possible. An air-conditioned environment, such as a mall or library, even for a few hours each day helps your body to cool down, if your home is not air-conditioned
- Take frequent cool showers or baths. However, avoid extreme temperature changes. A cool shower immediately after coming in from high temperatures can result in hypothermia, particularly for the elderly and very young
- Check on the elderly, physically ill people, those who have heart disease or high blood pressure. These people are especially susceptible to heat-related illness
- Avoid too much sunshine. Sunburn slows the skin's ability to cool itself
- Wear light weight, loose fitting clothing that covers as much skin as possible to help maintain normal body temperature, while protecting the skin
- Wear a wide-brimmed hat (keeps head cooler), sunglasses and use sunscreen with SPF (Sun Protection Factor) of 15 or higher
- Slow down! Reduce, eliminate, or reschedule strenuous activity such as running, biking and lawn care work. Limit outdoor activities to early mornings or late evenings. Rest in shady areas
- Eat well-balanced, light meals. Foods that increase metabolic activity/body heat, such as high protein, increase a person's water loss
- NEVER leave anyone or a pet in a closed, parked vehicle. Even if car windows are open slightly, the temperature in a car can rise from 30° C degrees to 50° C degrees within 10 to 15 minutes. Pets may experience drastic and rapid increases in body temperature and die in this situation

Plan to drink the recommended amounts spread out throughout the day!

For more information about preventing heat-related illness
Call the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 Ext 2330
Or visit www.healthunit.com

How to Treat Symptoms of Heat-Related Illness:

If you, or someone you know is experiencing any of these symptoms, it is important to take action quickly!

Heat Cramps:

- stop all activity and move to a cool place
- slowly drink clear juice or sports beverage
- do not return to strenuous activity for a few hours after the cramps are gone because more exertion may lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke
- seek medical attention if the cramps are not gone within 1 hour

Heat Exhaustion:

- can develop after several days of high temperatures and inadequate fluid intake
- drink cool, non-alcoholic drinks, slowly (every 15-20 minutes) to avoid nausea and vomiting
- REST - get somewhere cool, and do not rush back to physical activity
- have a cool shower or bath, and wear lightweight clothing
- monitor body temperature until it decreases

Heat Stroke:

- the most serious heat-related illness - the body is not able to control temperature
- temperature rises rapidly, sweating mechanism fails, body can't cool down
- body temperature may rise to 104° F - 110° F degrees (40° C degrees or more) within 10-15 minutes, potentially causing permanent disability or death, if not treated
- Call 911 for Emergency Medical Service (EMS) or take the person to the hospital emergency. If EMS is delayed, call the hospital for further instructions
- get person into shade/cool area and offer cool non-alcoholic fluids (unless vomiting)
- cool body rapidly - tub of cool water/cool shower/spray with garden hose

For more information about preventing and/or treating heat-related illness please contact the Middlesex-London Health Unit at:
519-663-5317, ext. 2220
or visit www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Hypothermia Due to Overexposure

WHAT IS HYPOTHERMIA?

Hypothermia is a condition that occurs from overexposure to cold. A person's body temperature falls below normal. Normal body temperature ranges from 36.1 to 37.8 degrees Celsius (97 to 100 degrees Fahrenheit).

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF HYPOTHERMIA?

As body temperature drops, consciousness begins to get clouded. The person is pale and lethargic, appears confused or disoriented, and may hallucinate. In the beginning stages of hypothermia, the person shivers a lot, but as body temperature decreases, shivering actually decreases. This may give people a false sense of well being. **Persons with these symptoms must be kept warm and be taken immediately to hospital.**

WHAT HAPPENS IN SEVERE CASES OF HYPOTHERMIA?

In severe hypothermia (body temperature below 30°C or 86°F) the person becomes unconscious, breathing is shallow and pulse is irregular or hard to detect. **If someone is found with these symptoms, call for immediate emergency medical treatment.**

WHO IS AT RISK FOR DEVELOPING HYPOTHERMIA?

Healthy individuals exposed to cold weather or conditions for long periods of time are at risk for hypothermia. Elderly persons and infants under 1 year of age are most at risk. Infants are particularly susceptible if they are premature or small for their age.

CAN HYPOTHERMIA BE PREVENTED?

The best way to prevent hypothermia is not to stay in an unheated home, but to move to a warm place. People who remain in unheated homes should make sure that their head, hands and feet are well covered and dry. Physical activity releases heat through the body so keep moving!

2008 February

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MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

Six Simple Steps to Help Keep You and Me Healthy

September 14, 2009

1. Wash your hands often using soap and water or an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Ensure hands are washed:
    - After coughing, sneezing or blowing your nose
    - After shaking hands
    - Before eating
    - Before putting in contact lenses
    - Before touching your face

2. Avoid touching your face as much as possible.

3. Cough and sneeze into a tissue or your elbow. Throw out used tissues right away.

4. Do not share objects that have been in other people's mouths, e.g. toothbrushes, drinks and water bottles, unwashed utensils, cigarettes, lip products, and mouthpieces of musical instruments.

5. Stay home if you feel sick. You can return to work or school when you're feeling better and you're fever free. Staying home will help prevent the spread of infections to co-workers and the general public.

6. Frequently clean common surfaces such as keyboards, doorknobs, countertops, etc.

Symptoms of influenza include:

- Fever
- Cough
- Sore throat
- Headache
- Sore muscles
- Joint pain
- Sometimes diarrhea and vomiting

For more information, visit the Middlesex-London Health Unit web site at www.healthunit.com or call 519-663-5317 ext. 2330.

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

Internal Cooking Temperatures of Food

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Use a probe thermometer to monitor temperatures

Product	Variety	Celsius (° C)	Fahrenheit (°
Ground Meat and Meat Mixtures	Turkey, chicken	74	165
	Veal, beef, lamb, pork	71	160
Beef	All cuts	60 - 74	140 - 165
Veal	All cuts	60 - 74	140 - 165
Lamb/Goat	All cuts	60 - 74	140 - 165
Pork	All cuts	71	160
Poultry	Chicken, whole	82	180
	Turkey, whole	82	180
	Poultry breasts	74	165
	Stuffing (cooked alone, or in bird)	74	165
	Duck, goose, pheasant	82	180
Ham	Fresh (raw)	71	160
	Pre-cooked (to reheat)	60	140
Seafood	Fish, shellfish and other seafood	70	158

For more information contact Environmental Health at 663-5317 ext. 2300.

Information taken from:
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care website.
Accessed November 10, 2003.
Safe Food Handling.
www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/foodsafe/foodhandl.html

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MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Mixing of Chlorine (Bleach) Solution for Disinfecting

Household bleach (5.25% sodium hypochlorite) mixed with water, is an inexpensive and effective disinfectant. By mixing different amounts of bleach with water you can make a high, intermediate-high, intermediate, or low level disinfectant.

High level disinfection (approximately 5000 ppm)

Preparing a 1: 10 Household Bleach Solution:

- 62 ml (1/4 cup) household bleach + 562 ml (2 1/4 cups) water
- 250 ml (1 cup) household bleach + 2250 ml (9 cups) water

Recommended Uses:

- cleaning up a blood or body fluid spill
- when directed by public health
- for use on semi-critical medical and personal service instruments

Intermediate - High level disinfection (approximately 1000 ppm)

Preparing a 1: 50 Household Bleach Solution:

- 20 ml (4 teaspoons) household bleach + 1000 ml (4 cups) water
- 100ml (7 tablespoons) household bleach + 5000 ml (20 cups) water

Recommended Uses:

- for use in washrooms, change tables in childcare, during outbreaks of respiratory diseases or vomiting and diarrhea

Intermediate level disinfection (approximately 500 ppm)

Preparing a 1: 100 Household Bleach Solution:

- 5 ml (1 teaspoons) household bleach + 500 ml (2 cups) water
- 62 ml (1/4 cup) household bleach + 6138 ml (24 3/4 cups) water

Recommended Uses:

- for use on non-critical medical or personal service instruments

Low level disinfection (approximately 100 ppm)

Preparing a 1: 500 Household Bleach Solution:

- 1ml (1/4 teaspoons) household bleach to 500ml (2 cups) water
- 20 ml (4 teaspoons) household bleach to 10 L (40 cups or approx. 2 gallons)

Recommended Uses:

- safe level for toys, dishes and utensils and food contact surfaces

Remember:

- A bleach and water solution should be mixed daily to preserve its strength
- Leave the solution on the surface for a minimum of one minute
- Cleaning must be done prior to disinfecting

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MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

Public Health: Management of Disasters & Emergencies

FACT SHEET fact sheet

We are Community Partners in Response

Middlesex-London Health Unit's professionals take responsibility of community health both in disaster and emergency preparedness and response by:

1. identifying groups most at risk from disaster (i.e.: the vulnerable and ill)
2. using traditional planning principles and serving as an integral part of the preparation and the delivery of public health services during the impact and post impact phases of the emergency
3. providing disaster education in advance of (what to expect in a disaster) and after (how to deal with the effects) of the event
4. taking responsibility for the health of a community following a disaster
5. using such resources as assessment, epidemiology and data analysis to make and implement recommendations for limiting morbidity and mortality
6. cooperating, collaborating and participating with the broadest range of community agencies to ensure that primary health, public health, mental health and social impacts are adequately addressed in disaster planning
7. preventing disease by providing health authorities information on injury prevention, food and water safety and vector control
8. assuring that health services continue post impact, including acute care, continuity of care, primary care and emergency care
9. inspecting evacuation/reception centers and feeding operations
10. communicating with government officials about the public health effects of potential disasters and providing expert assistance during and after emergencies
11. developing and advocate public policies designed to reduce the public health impact of potential disasters
12. collaborating with other health and human service professionals to rigorously evaluate intervention outcomes
13. participating as full partners with emergency management professionals in preparedness, response and recovery
14. staffing public health clinics involved in an emergency
15. assuring the ability to respond when needed is met
16. conducting health surveillance, detecting, identifying and verifying individual cases through laboratory sciences and to institute measures to control infectious disease
17. providing expert assistance to responding to chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear hazards
18. providing public health information
19. coordinating with other sectors on long-term consequence management

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When disaster strikes, our part includes:

- emergency health communications
- disease outbreak management
- immunization
- monitoring of water quality
- food safety
- home safety
- pandemic planning
- hazardous materials
- air quality
- family preparedness
- extreme weather response
-

For more information contact:

Patricia Simone
Manager, Emergency Preparedness
Middlesex-London Health Unit
(519) 663-5317 ext. 2371
or www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

RABIES AWARENESS

What is rabies?

Rabies is a disease caused by a virus that attacks the central nervous system of warm-blooded mammals (animals).

- Rabies is spread from infected animals to people by **saliva**.
- This could happen after being bitten or by contact with contaminated saliva on a cut or moist tissues of the mouth, nose or eyes.
- The saliva of an infected animal can spread rabies even before there are any signs of the disease.
- All animals that contract rabies will die.
- **If left untreated**, rabies is also fatal to humans.

What are the symptoms of rabies?

Rabies can manifest itself as "dumb" or "furious" rabies.

In "dumb" rabies:

- Some animals may become depressed and retreat to isolated places;
- Wild animals, especially skunks, may lose their fear of humans; and/or
- Animals may show signs of partial paralysis such as abnormal facial expressions, drooping head, sagging jaw, or paralyzed hind limbs.

In "furious" rabies:

- Animals may show extreme excitement and aggression;
- Animals may gnaw and bite their own limbs;
- Animals may attack stationary objects or other animals; and
- Bouts of "furious" rabies usually alternate with periods of depression.

How long does it take for an animal to show signs of rabies after it is infected?

The time period between exposure to the virus and the onset of symptoms can range from approximately two weeks to many months. The length of time between infection and the onset of symptoms depends on the severity of the bite or the wounds and their distance from the brain.

How is rabies diagnosed?

Although the symptoms of rabies are fairly characteristic and a veterinarian may make a clinical or tentative diagnosis, a final diagnosis can only be made by laboratory examination of an animal's brain. It is therefore important that, when an animal has to be killed, it is not shot or damaged in the head.

What should I do if I am bitten or scratched?

- Wash the area thoroughly with soap and water.
- If the animal is a pet (e.g. dog or cat), get the owner's name, address and telephone number. Find out when and where the animal had its last rabies shot.
- Get medical attention. Some wounds require stitches, and a shot for tetanus (lockjaw) may be necessary.

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- Call the local Health Unit to report the animal bite. Have the following information ready:
  - Type and description of the animal.
  - Owner's name and where they live.
  - How the bite occurred.
- The Health Unit follows up on all reports of animal bites to ensure that an animal is healthy and if necessary, will order rabies vaccine for the person who was bitten.
- Call your local Animal Care and Control Centre if the animal is running at large. They will want to know if the animal has been seen in the area before and what direction it was seen heading. (In London, the Animal Care Centre can be reached at 685-1330).
- Call the Police for assistance in locating a dog or if the animal owner does not give you the information that is needed.

Can rabies be treated?

Yes! If you are bitten or scratched by an animal with rabies, you will get a series of fives shots of anti-rabies vaccine. The vaccine works and it is safe.

What can I do to prevent rabies?

There is much that you can do to help identify and prevent the spread of rabies. Here are some preventative measures that you can take:

- ✓ Do not feed or touch a wild or strange (unknown) animal.
- ✓ Do not touch a dead or sick animal.
- ✓ Make sure your pet is kept up to date with its rabies vaccination. (It is the law)
- ✓ Keep your pet confined on a leash.
- ✓ Learn to identify the signs of rabies in animals.
- ✓ Warn your children to stay away from unknown, wild, or aggressive animals.
- ✓ Seek immediate medical attention if contacted by a potentially rabid animal.
- ✓ If you see a potentially rabid animal, contact your local animal control centre.
- ✓ Reduce your chances of contact by animal-proofing your house, cottage and workplace.
- ✓ Be on the lookout for hitchhiking raccoons.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Health and Long -Term Care: Rabies Awareness in Ontario.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
Environmental Health and Chronic Disease Prevention Services
519-663-5317 ext. 2300

Or, you can read more about rabies awareness and prevention on the:

Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care Web Site:
http://www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/rabies/rabies1.html

Ministry of Natural Resources Web Site: http://rabies.mnr.gov.on.ca/

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

RABIES REMINDER FOR SUMMER CAMPS

Introduction

Summer camps may be located in areas that are also home to bats and other wildlife. Camp buildings are often places where bats like to roost. If people are sleeping in cabins with bats, or if children handle bats found on the ground, rabies exposures can occur.

What is Rabies?

Rabies is a disease caused by a virus that attacks mammals' central nervous system, and is spread by contact with the saliva of an infected animal. This could happen during a bite or by contact with contaminated saliva on broken skin or moist tissues of the mouth, nose or eyes. An animal that has contracted rabies will die. If left untreated, rabies is fatal to humans.

Bats and Rabies

Bats are beneficial (they eat over three times their body weight in insects every night), but they can cause disease. Bats have been known to cause rabies in humans. **A bat exposure is considered to occur when:**

- ✓ A bat lands on a person.
- ✓ A sleeping person awakes and finds a bat in the room.
- ✓ A bat is found in the room of an unattended child or person who could not report whether he or she had direct contact with the bat.

The bat's small teeth may leave marks that are not easily seen and the bite may not be felt. Bats that are infected with rabies are often mistaken for injured animals when they are flopping on the ground. Abnormal bat behaviour includes; being on the ground, landing on someone, and flying during the day. Sometimes no abnormal behaviour is noticed, but **all** contact with bats or any other wild animal should be reported to the camp nurse or camp director, and your local health unit.

Inspection of Camp Buildings

The best time to inspect all cabins and sleeping quarters is during the spring before the camp opens. Routine checks should also be carried out by camp staff.

Inspections should include:

- ❑ attics, rafters, porches, walls for any sign of roosting bats, such as bat guano and crystallized urine, or a musty odour.
- ❑ looking for openings through which bats could enter (any opening larger than a dime).
- ❑ not allowing cabins to be used for sleeping (if there is evidence of bat roosts) until they have been batproofed.

How to Batproof Camp Buildings

- ❑ seal any openings larger than a dime with caulking
- ❑ use window screens and chimney caps, fill electrical and plumbing holes with stainless steel wool or caulking, and make sure all doors to the outside close tightly.
- ✗ **do not** batproof buildings during the period from late May to mid-August, to avoid trapping baby bats inside the building.

What to do if an exposure to a bat occurs

- ❑ try to confine the bat in a can or jar taking care to avoid touching the bat.
- ❑ notify the camp physician and the Health Unit immediately.

If you have trapped the bat contact the Health Unit at 519-663-5317, ext. 2300, after hours or on weekends please call 519-675-7523 and arrangements will be made to submit the bat to the Federal Laboratory for rabies testing. If the bat is found to be rabid or if the bat is not available for testing, exposed persons will be advised to get rabies vaccination.

For more information contact Environmental Health at 519-663-5317 ext. 2300
Other health unit resources are available at the health unit or go to
www.healthunit.com

Information obtained from:

Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources website. Accessed on March 21, 2007
Questions and Answers May 2003
http://rabies.mnr.gov.on.ca/spectrasites/viewers/showArticle.cfm?objectid=B46596AB-DDE7-49BE-A3E18CAE095ACF6B&method=displayfullnobarnotitle&id=B46596AB-DDE7-49BE-A3E18CAE095ACF6B&siteid=DD40F8F0-A2C7-4547-B42CFC76D2CA7939 © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2002

Health Canada website. Accessed on March 21, 2007
Effective Control of Bats April 1997
www.hc-sc.gc.ca/pmra-arla

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Safe Food and Water During an Emergency

Your Food Safety

During an emergency, power failure or mechanical break down, food spoilage can result from lack of proper refrigeration.

Food in your Freezer

- A full freezer will keep food frozen about 2 days.
- A half-loaded freezer about half a day if the freezer is left closed.

Additional insulation, covering the freezer with blankets, and adding ice to your freezer will assist in keeping the food frozen longer.

Refreezing

As a general rule, if there are ice crystals in the food, and there are no obvious signs of spoilage, then it's safe to quickly refreeze.

- Meat that has thawed but the temperature has not increased to above 4° C can be safely cooked and then eaten or refrozen.
- Do not refreeze thawed cooked foods.

Throw away any food that has completely thawed and has been sitting at room temperature for more than 2 hours or an unknown period of time.
Note: Partial thawing and refreezing of food may reduce the food quality.

Food in your Refrigerator

Keep an appliance thermometer in your refrigerator
A refrigerator without power will keep food cold for 4-6 hours depending on room temperature and the cooler temperature before the power outage.

- Keep the refrigerator door closed and add ice to maximize the time the food stays cold.
- Use a probe type thermometer to monitor internal food temperatures.
- Immediate use of potentially hazardous foods is recommended when the internal temperature of the food rises above 4 C.

Potentially hazardous foods stored above 4° C for more than 2 hours should be thrown away

Potentially hazardous foods include:

- raw and cooked meats, poultry, seafood, dairy products (milk, cream, yogurt, soft cheeses) and eggs
- cooked pasta, rice and potatoes
- prepared salads, casseroles, soups and stews
  custard, pudding, chiffon, cream filled

The following foods can be stored without refrigeration:

- margarine and butter
- fresh fruit and vegetables
- peanut butter, jams and jellies
- ketchup, barbecue sauce, mustard
- hard or processed cheese

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Alternate Food Storage

Outdoors (garage, porch, balcony) - If the outside temperature is less than 4° C, potentially hazardous foods can be stored outdoors safely.
Note: Be sure to place food in leak-proof and animal-proof containers.

Family and friends - Relocate food to freezers and refrigerators of those not affected by the power outage

Garbage Disposal

All contaminated food should be double bagged and placed in leak proof containers.

Your Water Safety

Safe water is needed for drinking, brushing teeth, washing fruits and vegetables and cooking. An emergency or widespread power outage may interrupt, or affect the safety of, your current water supply.

Alternate Supplies

Bottled water - Use commercially sealed containers of water or store water in clean, labeled containers with tight fitting lids.
Well water - Obtain water from a groundwater supply if power is available to operate the pump.
Another municipal system - Import water from an unaffected municipal supply.
Hidden water sources in your home -

- Ice cubes.
- Hot water tank - To use the water in your hot water tank, turn off the electricity or gas, and open the drain at the bottom of the tank. Shut off the water intake valve and turn on a hot water faucet.
- Plumbing pipes - Let air into the plumbing by opening the highest faucet in your home and draining the water from the lowest one.
- Toilet tank reservoir - The tank, not the bowl.

All water, except that from commercially sealed containers, must be treated before use.

Emergency Water Treatment

Boiling - Heat water to a vigorous rolling boil for 1 minute and cool before use.
Disinfection - Add 1.25mL (1/4 tsp.) liquid bleach to 4.5 L (1 gallon) of water, mix and let stand for 15 minutes.

- Use regular household bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite).
- Do not use scented bleach, bleach with added cleaners or alternative bleaches.

For more information contact Environmental Health at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 663-5317 ext. 2300.

Information adapted from: Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care website Accessed October 15, 2003 *"Food Safety: If there is an electrical power blackout*
How to ensure food is safe to eat." www.health.gov.on.ca:80/english/public/pub/foodsafe/homefood.html © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2002
"What you need to get safe water" www.health.gov.on.ca:80/english/public/pub/foodsafe/water.html © Queen's Printer for Ontario, 2002
Federal Emergency Management Agency website Accessed January 12, 2004. "*Food and Water in an emergency"* www.fema.gov/pdf/library/f&web.pdf January 2004

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FACT SHEET fact sheet

Safe Food Handling: How to Prepare Food at Home

Shopping

Buy cold food last and get home fast.
When shopping for food:

- Buy cold and frozen food last
- Make sure that cold foods are cold and frozen foods are solid.
- Check the "best before" date
- Choose canned foods that are free of dents, cracks or bulging lids.
- Bag raw meat, fish and poultry separately.
- Transport foods home quickly and refrigerate.
- **Avoid** unpasteurized juices and ciders.

Storing

Keep cold food cold. Keep food safe.

- Keep the refrigerator at 4°C (40°F) and the freezer at -18°C (0°F). Use an appliance thermometer to make sure your fridge is the right temperature.
- Freeze fresh meat, fish or poultry immediately if it will not be used within a few days.
- Store raw meat, fish or poultry on a plate or in a container in the lowest part of the refrigerator to prevent juices from dripping onto other food.
- Store all household cleaning supplies and other chemicals separately and away from food.
- Get rid of household pests such as flies, rodents, and cockroaches.

Preparing

Keep the preparation area clean. Thaw in the refrigerator.

- **Wash your hands** with warm water and soap before preparing food and frequently during preparation, especially after handling raw meat, fish or poultry.
- Keep raw meat, fish and poultry and their juices - away from other food.
- **Clean and sanitize** cutting boards, utensils and containers that have been in contact with raw meat, fish and poultry.
- Change kitchen towels, sponges and cloths frequently.
- Marinate foods in the refrigerator.

Thawing

Always thaw foods

- in the refrigerator
- under cold running water
- in the microwave

Sanitizing solution: 5ml (1 tsp.) bleach in 750ml (3cups) water

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Cooling

Use small containers for rapid cooling.
Avoid the Danger Zone: 4°C (40°F) to 60°C (140°F)
It is important to cool food quickly by:

- Cool food in shallow containers.
- Remove stuffing and cool separately.
- Place containers on wire racks or in an ice bath.
- Cut large pieces of meat into portions.
- **Never** overload the refrigerator - cool air must be able to circulate.

Cooking

Cook meat and poultry thoroughly
Use a meat thermometer

- Cook meat and poultry thoroughly. Check temperatures with a probe thermometer.

In the microwave -

- Cover food with plastic or a lid.
- Stir and rotate food.
- Observe standing time in recipe.
-

Internal Cooking Temperatures

	° C	° F
Ground poultry	74	165
Ground meat	71	160
Beef, veal, lamb	60-74	140-165
Pork	71	160
Poultry - whole	82	180
Poultry - breast	74	165
Raw ham	71	160
Pre-cooked ham	60	140
Seafood	70	158

Serving

Never leave perishable food out for more than two hours
Keep hot food hot, above 60°C (140°F).

- on a hot plate,
- on another heat source.

Keep cold food cold, below 4°C (40°F)

- on ice.
- Serve food in smaller containers, keeping extras in the oven for hot food or in the refrigerator for cold food.
- Always use utensils to serve food.
- Use clean containers and utensils to serve food that has been cooked.
- **Never** use utensils that were used to handle raw meat or poultry.
- **Never** add more food to serving dishes already on the table.

Reheating

- Bring soups, sauces and gravy to a quick boil.
- Heat other leftovers quickly and to at least 74° C.
- Throw out leftovers that have been reheated.

Can I use it?

When in doubt, throw it out!

- Generally, food with mould on it should be thrown out. Hard cheeses, salamis and some produce may be kept if the mould and a large area around the mould can be cut out.
- Never taste food that doesn't look right or smell right.

Is it food poisoning?

Bacteria that you can't see, taste or smell can multiply rapidly in food if it's not kept at the right temperature. Bacteria in food can cause illness. Health Canada estimates that 2 million people get food poisoning every year. Most cases of food poisoning can be prevented if food is handled properly.
Common symptoms of food poisoning include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cramps or fever. Symptoms can appear 30 minutes from the time the food was eaten to two weeks later. Most often people become sick 4 to 48 hours after eating.
If symptoms are severe, or the person who is sick is very young, elderly, pregnant or already sick with another type of illness, medical attention is recommended.

For more information about Safe Food Handling & Food Poisoning contact Environmental Health at 663-5317 ext. 2300.

Other resources available at:
Canadian Food Inspection Agency www.inspection.gc.ca
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care www.health.gov.on.ca
Information adapted from:
Ontario Ministry of Health and Long Term Care website
"Safe Food Handling". Accessed November 10, 2003
www.health.gov.on.ca/english/public/pub/foodsafe/foodhandl.html
January 2004

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Staying Warm in an Unheated House

Coping with a Winter Power Outage

To minimize discomfort and possible health problems:

- conserve body heat by dressing warmly;
- find or improvise an alternative heat source;
- confine heating to a single room;
- keep safety a foremost consideration.

While chances of freezing to death in your home are small, there's a greater danger of death by fire, asphyxiation from lack of oxygen or carbon monoxide poisoning.

Think Safety First

Safety is of extreme importance in a heating emergency.

- **Do not** burn anything larger than candles inside your home without providing adequate ventilation to the outside.
- **Do not** use a gas or electric oven for heating. A gas oven may go out or burn inefficiently, leading to carbon monoxide poisoning. An electric oven was not designed for space heating.
- **Do not** burn outdoor barbecue charcoal briquettes inside — even in a fireplace.
- **Do not** try to use bottled gas in natural gas appliances unless you have converted the appliances for such use.
- **Cross Ventilate** - Any type of heater (except electric) should be vented. If you use an unvented heater, cross-ventilate by opening a window an inch on each side of the room. It is better to let in some cold air than to run the risk of carbon monoxide poisoning.
- **Watch for Fire** - One person should stay awake to watch for fire and to make sure ventilation is adequate. If the designated person feels drowsy or has a headache, it may be a sign of inadequate ventilation and effects of carbon monoxide.
- Keep fire fighting materials, battery operated smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector in the room utilizing the alternate heat source.
- Locate the heat source where it will not start an object on fire and will not be knocked over.
-

Find an Alternative Heat Source

You may have alternative heating resources around your home. Possibilities include:

- A gas-burning generator operated outdoors. This is the solution of choice to restore near normal in home activity.
- Properly vented wood stoves and fireplaces.

Interior space heaters operated in accordance with manufacturer instructions.

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Select a Room to be Heated

To increase efficiency of available heat, close off all rooms except the one to be heated. When selecting a room, consider the following:

- Confine emergency heat to a small area.
- Try to select a room on the "warm" side of the house, away from prevailing winds. Avoid rooms with large windows or uninsulated walls. Interior bathrooms probably have the lowest air leakage and heat loss. Your basement may be a warm place in cold weather because the earth acts as insulation and minimizes heat loss.
- Isolate the room from the rest of the house by keeping doors closed, hanging bedding or heavy drapes over entryways, or by erecting temporary partitions of cardboard or plywood.
- Hang drapes, bedding or shower curtains over doors and windows.
-

Conserve Body Heat

- Put on extra clothing.
- If cold is severe, your bed may be the warmest place.
- Use extra blankets and coverings to trap body heat; this is an especially good way to keep children warm.

For more information contact Environmental Health at 663-5317 ext. 2300.

Excerpts taken from:
University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension website. Accessed on January 12, 2004.
"Winter Storms". Complete document at www.uwex.edu/ces/news/info/winter.pdf

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Understanding the UV Index

Environment Canada developed the UV (ultraviolet) Index to inform Canadians about the strength of the sun's UV (ultraviolet) rays. UV rays can cause sunburns, eye cataracts, skin aging and skin cancer. The higher the UV Index number, the stronger the sun's rays, and the greater the need to take precautions. The table below outlines the sun protection actions recommended at different levels of the UV Index.

Environment Canada's UV Index

UV Index	Description	Sun Protection Actions
0 - 2	Low	• Minimal sun protection required for normal activity • Wear sunglasses on bright days. If outside for more than one hour, cover up and use sunscreen • Reflections off snow can nearly double UV strength. Wear sunglasses and apply sunscreen
3 - 5	Moderate	• Take precautions – cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen - especially if you will be outside for 30 minutes or more • Look for shade near midday when the sun is strongest
6 – 7	High	• Protection required – UV damages the skin and can cause sunburn • Reduce time in the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take full precautions – seek shade, cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen
8 - 10	Very High	• Extra precautions required – unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn quickly • Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m. and take full precautions – seek shade, cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen
11 +	Extreme	• Values of 11 or more are very rare in Canada. However, the UV Index can reach 14 or more in the tropics and southern U.S. • Take full precautions. Unprotected skin will be damaged and can burn in minutes. Avoid the sun between 11 a.m. and 4 p.m., cover up, wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen • White sand and other bright surfaces reflect UV and increase UV exposure

Environment Canada http://www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/education/uvindex/protecting_yourself_e.html

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Sun Protection Tips

- The amount of UV you receive depends on both the strength of the sun's rays (measured by the UV Index) and the amount of time you spend in the sun. Reduce your time in the sun – seek shade, particularly between 11:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. from April to September.

- Cover up, wear a broad-brimmed hat, a shirt with long sleeves and wrap-around sunglasses or ones with side shields

- Use sunscreen – with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 15 or higher, with both UVA and UVB protection. Apply generously before going outside, and reapply often, especially after swimming or exercise

- Listen for Environment Canada's UV Index – it's included in your local weather forecast whenever it is forecast to reach 3 (moderate) or more that day.

UV Information: www.msc.ec.gc.ca/topics/uv
http://www.msc-smc.ec.gc.ca/education/uvindex/protecting_yourself_e.html

Weather Forecasts: www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/

For more information about UV Index
contact the Middlesex-London Health Unit
at 519-663-5317 Ext 2300
or visit www.healunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Well Water Disinfection

Residents in Middlesex-London are advised to consult with a local Public Health Inspector at 663-5317, ext. 2300 before disinfecting their well.

Disinfection of Wells

You may need to disinfect a well that:

- has been flooded,
- has undergone alteration or repair,
- has a history of unsatisfactory bacteriological sample results.

Note:

a. Well disinfection solves a limited number of problems that may be causing unsatisfactory water quality.
b. An alternate source of water, or a water treatment system may be the only permanent long tem solutions to on-going problems with quality.

In situations of known or suspected well water contamination:

- **Boil.** Bring water to a vigorous rolling boil for 1 minute before use.
- **Chlorinate.** Add 1.25 ml (1/4 tsp.) of liquid household bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite) to 4.5 litres (1 gallon) of water.
  Mix well and let stand for 15 minutes.

How to Disinfect a Well

For convenience, the following tables will give the amounts of household bleach to be added to dug wells (up to 3 feet in diameter) or drilled wells (up to 6 inches in diameter), at various water depths.

Notes on Chlorine Use

a. If Calcium Hypochlorite powder is used, it should be mixed with water to form a solution before being added.
Caution - Always add chemical to water and never water to chemical.
b. With most drilled wells, the chlorine solution can be added through the vented sanitary cap.
c. Any chlorine solution should be handled carefully. It can bleach clothing and injure the eyes and skin. In case of spills, wash off with large amounts of water.

Chlorine for Dug Wells (up to 3 feet in Diameter)			Chlorine for Drilled Wells (up to 6 inches in Diameter)	
Water Depth (Feet)	**Household Bleach (Quarts)**		**Water Depth (Feet)**	**Household Bleach (Ounces)**
5	1		25	5
10	2		50	10
15	3		75	15
20	4		100	20
25	5		125	25
30	6		150	30

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These quantities are based on liquid household bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite). If your bleach has a different strength, choose the correct amount of 5% bleach for your well size, multiply that amount by 5 and divide the product by the percentage of available chlorine in the bleach. The result will be the proper amount of bleach.

Note:

a. If the water level is between two of the values given, use the chlorine dose for the higher water level.
b. If you do not know how high the water stands in a drilled well, use the well depth to estimate the chlorine dose.

Let the Chlorine Work

If the water is piped to the house, pump the chlorinated water through the piping system. To be sure it disinfects the entire system allow each faucet to run until you can smell the chlorine and then turn it off. Let the chlorinated water stand in the well and in the piping system overnight (about 12 hours).

Remove the chlorine

Pump the water to waste until no further odour of chlorine can be detected in the water at any of the taps or the well is dry.

Take a Sample

Obtain a bacteriological sample bottle from your local health unit office or the Public Health Laboratory. Follow the directions for obtaining a sample included with the sample bottle.

Do not assume the water is safe until the laboratory results tell you so.
Until the results come back, continue to boil or treat the water before use.

Repeat the Test

Test the water at regular intervals (3-4 times a year) to make sure that no further contamination exists in the well.

For more information contact Environmental Health at 663-5317, Ext. 2300.

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

What Do I Save and What Do I Throw Away When the Power is Out?

When the electricity to your refrigerator or freezer is interrupted for an extended period of time, the safety of food stored in them becomes a concern. This fact sheet can help you determine the safety of your food.

Frozen Food: When to Save and When to Throw Away

Frozen foods in a fully-stocked freezer will stay frozen up to two days; in a half-filled freezer about one day. Keep the freezer door closed as much as possible. Refer to the chart below to help you decide if a specific food can be kept or should be thrown away.

	Still contains ice crystals and feels as cold as if refrigerated	**Thawed, held above 4°C (40° F) for over two hours**
Meat, Poultry or Seafood		
Beef, veal, lamb, ground meats	Refreeze	Discard
Poultry, ground poultry	Refreeze	Discard
Variety meat (liver, kidney, heart)	Refreeze	Discard
Casseroles, stews, soups, convenience foods, pizza	Refreeze	Discard
Fish, shellfish, breaded seafood	Refreeze	Discard
Dairy		
Milk	Refreeze	Discard
Liquid Eggs, egg products	Refreeze	Discard
Ice cream, frozen yogurt	Discard	Discard
Soft/semi-soft cheese (cream cheese, ricotta	Refreeze	Discard
Hard cheeses (cheddar, swiss, parmesan)	Refreeze	Refreeze
Casseroles containing milk, cream, eggs, soft cheeses	Refreeze	Discard
Cheesecake	Refreeze	Discard
Fruits		
Juices	Refreeze	Refreeze (discard if moldy, yeasty smell, or sliminess develops)
Home or commercially packaged	Refreeze	
Vegetables		
Juices	Refreeze	Discard after held above 4°C (40° F) for six hours
Home or commercially packaged: blanched	Refreeze	
Breads, pastries		
Bread, rolls, muffins, cakes (without custard fillings)	Refreeze	Discard
Cakes, pies, pastries with custard or cheese filling	Refreeze	Discard
Pie crusts	Refreeze	Refreeze
Commercial and homemade bread dough	Refreeze	Refreeze
Other		
Casseroles – pasta, rice-based	Refreeze	Discard
Flour, cornmeal, nuts	Refreeze	Refreeze

Refrigerator Food: When to Save and When to Throw Away

Refrigerated foods will generally stay safe for four to six hours; if the refrigerator door is kept closed. Refer to the chart below to help you decide if a specific food may be kept or should be thrown away.

	Food Still Cold, held at 4°C (40° F) or above under two hours	Thawed, held above 4°C (40° F) for over two hours
Meat, Poultry or Seafood		
Fresh or leftover meat, poultry, fish, seafood	Safe	Discard
Thawing meat or poultry	Safe	Discard
Meat, tuna, shrimp, chicken, egg salad	Safe	Discard
Gravy, stuffing	Safe	Discard
Lunch meats, hot dogs, bacon, sausage, dried beef	Safe	Discard
Pizza-meat topped	Safe	Discard
Canned meats (not labeled “Keep Refrigerated”) – refrigerated after opening	Safe	Discard
Canned hams (labeled “Keep Refrigerated”)	Safe	Discard
Casseroles, soups, stews	Safe	Discard
Dairy		
Milk, cream, sour cream, buttermilk, evaporated milk, yogurt	Safe	Discard
Butter, margarine	Safe	Safe
Baby formula - opened	Safe	Discard
Eggs – fresh, hard cooked in shell	Safe	Discard
Egg dishes, custards, puddings	Safe	Discard
Hard cheeses, processed cheeses	Safe	Safe
Soft cheeses, cottage cheese	Safe	Discard
Fruits		
Canned fruits	Safe	Safe
Fresh fruits, coconut, raisins, dried fruits, candied fruits, dates	Safe	Safe
Vegetables		
Vegetables- cooked, juice - opened	Safe	Discard after six hours
Baked potato	Safe	Discard
Fresh mushrooms, herbs, spices	Safe	Safe
Garlic – chopped in oil or butter	Safe	Discard
Breads, pastries		
Bread, rolls, muffins, cakes	Safe	Safe
Pastries - cream filled	Safe	Discard
Pies – custard, cheese filled, chiffons	Safe	Discard
Pies -fruit	Safe	Safe
Refrigerated biscuits, rolls cookie dough	Safe	Discard
Other		
Cooked pasta, spaghetti	Safe	Discard
Pasta salads with mayonnaise or vinegar base	Safe	Discard
Mayonnaise, tarter sauce, horseradish	Safe	Discard after eight hours
Open salad dressing, jelly, relish, BBQ sauce, mustard, catsup, olives	Safe	Safe

Chart courtesy of the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture and Fisheries
http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/foodsafety/pdfs/poweroff.pdf January 2006

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

COLD WEATHER ALERT GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE CENTRES

The Medical Officer of Health issues a Cold Weather Alert when one or more of the following criteria are met:

- Daily predicted low temperature of –15° Celsius without wind chill; or
- Wind chill reaches the level at which Environment Canada issues a warning for outdoor activity for people in the Middlesex-London area; or
- Extreme weather conditions, such as blizzard or ice storm.

Recommendations

1. Establish a policy and procedure to deal with potential consequences of extreme cold temperatures and winter storms (e.g. power outages, lack of transportation). An emergency kit should be readily available.

2. Plan to ***reduce*** the amount of time children spend outside when the temperature reaches –15° Celsius or colder, with or without wind chill.
   Children should be ***kept indoors*** when the temperature reaches –25° Celsius with or without wind chill. Some people are more susceptible to cold, particularly children, and some medications can increase a person's susceptibility to cold also. Parents should consult with their physician.

3. Ensure that children are dressed warmly, covering exposed skin: insulated boots, winter weight coats, mittens, hats and neck warmers.

4. Change wet clothing and footwear immediately (wet clothing chills the body rapidly).

5. Although it is unlikely that cold related injuries would occur during the day, all staff should be able to recognize and treat symptoms of frostbite and hypothermia. Make sure that children are given plenty of warm fluids to prevent dehydration.

6. Watch carefully for the following symptoms when children are playing outside:
   - Shivering
   - Discoloration of skin
   - Complaining of pain, numbness, burning or fatigue, confusion, slurring of speech
   - Stiffness

   Move the child indoors if any of the above symptoms occur.

7. Educate children in dealing with cold weather:
   - Drink plenty of fluids
   - Dress warmly
   - Recognize signs of injury due to the cold

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The Middlesex-London Health Unit recommends that childcare providers recognize the signs of cold related injuries, and follow first aid treatments promptly:

In all cases, get child to a warm place as soon as possible, remove wet clothing , and wrap child in a blanket if needed.

Signs of Injury Due To Cold	Treatment
Frostnip: • A mild form of frostbite, where only the skin freezes • Skin appears yellowish or white, but feels soft to the touch • Painful tingling or burning sensation	**What to do**: • Do not rub or massage the area • Warm the area gradually – use body heat (a warm hand), or blow warm breath on the area, avoid direct heat which can burn the skin (e.g. hot water bottle or heating pad) • Once the area is warm, do not reexpose it to the cold
Frostbite: • A more severe condition, where both the skin and the underlying tissue (fat, muscle and bone) are frozen • Skin appears white and waxy, and is hard to touch • No sensation, the are is numb	**What to do**: • Frostbite can be serious – get medical attention • Do not rub or massage the area • Warm the area gradually – use body heat, or blow warm breath on the area, avoid direct heat which can burn the skin (e.g. hot water bottle, heating pad)
Hypothermia: • Feeling cold over a prolonged period of time can cause a drop in body temperature (below the normal 37°C) • Shivering, confusion and slurring of speech • Can progress to loss of consciousness.	**What to do:** • **Call 911**, this is an emergency • While waiting for help, bring child indoors, remove wet clothing. • Body heat can warm child's temperature slowly, along with warm dry clothing and blankets. • Offer warm water, juice or milk. • **Do not** offer hot drinks • **Do not** use hot water bottles, or heating pads • **Do not** rub the area

For more information on how to recognize and prevent Injury due to the cold, please visit:
www.healthunit.com
or call: 663-5317 ext.2300

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Child Care Centres During a Boil Water Advisory

The Medical Officer of Health issues a boil water advisory when the water is unsafe for drinking based on:

- results of bacteriological testing, or
- an occurrence of illness in the community that has been linked to consumption of the water,
- other information indicating that the water is unsafe to drink, or
- as a precaution if there is a loss of pressure in the water system.

This factsheet is a guideline only. Special procedures may be necessary and additional instructions may be provided. Watch for media reports and notifications from the Health Unit. The boil water advisory remains in affect until the Medical Officer of Health lifts it.

✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

Where do I start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your facility.

Drinking Water

Immediately:

- **Secure a supply of potable (drinkable) water** by:
  - **Boiling the water**. Water should be brought to a rolling boil, boiled for 1 minute, allowed to cool and stored in a covered sanitized container. Caution: To avoid scalds, place the pot on the back burner and only boil as much water in a pot as you can comfortably lift without spilling.
  - **Using commercially bottled water.**
  - **Hauling water** from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container.
  - **Chlorinating small batches of water**. To chlorinate, add 1.25mL (1/4 tsp.) liquid household bleach to 4.5L (1 gallon) of water. Mix and let stand for 30 minutes. Use regular household bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite). Do not use scented bleach, bleach with added cleaners or alternative bleaches.
- Discard any ice or drinks made with untreated tap water.
- Shut off drinking water fountains.
- Post signs at all drinking fountains, in the kitchen area, and washrooms to advise of the boil water advisory and not to drink the water.

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Water for Food Preparation and Cooking

- Discard ready-to-eat food that was prepared with potentially unsafe water prior to the issuance of the Boil Water Advisory (coffee, juice, jello, ice etc.) If you are unsure of which foods to discard, consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team.
- Restrict menu to items that require little or no water, and little preparation.
- Use potable water as described above for food preparation activities. All water used to prepare fruits and vegetables, and any water used, as an ingredient in a ready-to-eat food product (coffee, juice, jello, infant formula, ice etc.) must be from one of the sources described above.
- Disconnect all equipment directly plumbed to the water system (ice machines, soft drink machines, coffee machines etc.).

Handwashing

- Heat potable water and place into an insulated container with a spigot that allows clean, warm water to flow over the hands. Provide liquid soap in a dispenser and paper towels as usual.
- It is recommended to follow-up with an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Refer to Fact Sheet **"The Use of Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers"** for guidance.
- Post handwashing directions at all sinks.

Ensure proper supervision of children at all times.

Water for Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Use single service utensils where possible; or
- Use potable water (as described above) to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils.

In the kitchen:

- Commercial dishwashers that use hot water 82°C (180°F) or above for the final rinse may continue to be used. Ensure units are functioning adequately. Low temperature dishwashers that use chemical sanitizers may not be effective against water contaminated with parasites.
- If you are unsure of the reason for the Boil Water Advisory, consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team.
- Using potable water (as described above), ensure proper manual dishwashing is followed if utensils must be washed by hand. Refer to the **"Dishwashing - 3 Sink Method"** poster for direction.

In the facility:

- Use potable water (as described above), to mix with chemical disinfectants used in environmental cleaning.

Diapering

- Use disposable gloves to change diapers and wash hands with potable water (as described above) and follow-up with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer . Refer to the Fact Sheet "**The Use of Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers"** for guidance.
- Wash children's hands with potable water (as described above) or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Disinfect the diapering area between children with an **intermediate-high level** chlorine disinfecting solution. Refer to the **"Mixing of Chlorine (Bleach) Solution for Disinfection"** sheet for guidance.

Toy Washing

- Dishwasher safe toys can be cleaned in a commercial dishwasher that uses a hot water- 82°C (180°F) or above final rinse.
- Toys washed by hand are to be washed and sanitized as per the manual dishwashing procedure. Refer to the **"Dishwashing - 3 Sink Method"** poster for instructions.
- Plush toys and dress-up clothes can be washed using the directions for laundry.

Laundry

- Launder items in the washing machine using a hot water rinse cycle. Dry in the dryer for minimum 30 minutes.
- Ensure that staff have access to potable water (as described above) for handwashing.

Water for Play

- Discontinue the use of water play tables for the duration of the Boil Water Advisory.
- Discontinue activities/crafts that use water, unless potable water (as described above) is used.

Personal Hygiene

- Teeth brushing activities must be completed with potable water as described above.

Medical Procedures

- Use potable water (as described above) for any procedures that use the facility water supply.

Surveillance for Enteric Illness (diarrhea and/or vomiting)

- Follow standard enteric precautions and outbreak management protocols for staff and children with diarrheal illness. Initiate testing to determine the pathogen involved.

- Staff with enteric illness symptoms must be excluded from work. They must not return until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours. If the Boil Water Advisory is issued as a result of a community outbreak, a 48-hour exclusion, and/or negative stool samples may be necessary before returning to work. For specific outbreak direction, consult with a member of the Infectious disease Control Team.

For returning to normal operations after the water supply is restored, refer to the factsheet **"Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption"** for guidance.

For further information, or assistance in planning for or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Child Care Centres During a Drinking Water Advisory

Important: Be sure you know what kind of advisory has been issued.

The Medical Officer of Health issues a drinking water advisory when the water has been determined unsafe for drinking and **the problem can not be corrected by boiling.** Drinking water advisories may be issued for chemical contamination of water supplies. A drinking water advisory is different from a boil water advisory.

This fact sheet is a guideline only. It is important to listen for media reports and watch for notifications from the Health Unit with specific information regarding the drinking water advisory. Special precautions may be necessary depending on the nature of the contamination.

✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

Where do I start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your facility.

Drinking Water

Immediately:

- **Secure a supply of potable (drinkable) water** by:
  - **Using commercially bottled water.**
  - **Hauling water** from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container or arranging for the use of a licensed drinking water hauling truck.
  - x **Do not boil water.** Boiling may concentrate chemical contaminants.
- Shut off drinking water fountains.
- Disconnect all equipment directly plumbed to the water system (ice machines, soft drink machines, coffee machines etc.).
- Post signs at all faucets, in the kitchen area, and washrooms to advise of the drinking water advisory and not to drink the water.

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Water for Food Preparation and Cooking

Immediately:

- Discard ready-to-eat food that was prepared with potentially unsafe water prior to the issuance of the Drinking Water Advisory (coffee, juice, jello, ice etc.) If you are unsure of which foods to discard, consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team.
- Restrict menu to items that require little or no water, and little preparation.
- Use commercially bottled water, water hauled from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, or water from a licensed drinking water hauling truck for food preparation activities.

Important: All water used to wash and prepare fruits and vegetables, and any water used as an ingredient in a ready-to-eat food product must be from one of the sources described above.

Handwashing and Personal Hygiene

Important: Watch for notifications from the Health Unit with specific information regarding the nature of the drinking water advisory. In some cases the water may not be suitable for <u>any</u> personal use.

- Unless special instructions have been released, wash hands as usual.
- If an alternate source of potable water (as described above) must be used for handwashing, post directions at all sinks.
- Teeth brushing must be completed with potable water (as described above).

Water for Cleaning and Sanitizing

Important: Watch for notifications from the Health Unit with specific information regarding the nature of the drinking water advisory. In some cases the water may not be suitable for <u>any</u> cleaning or sanitizing.

- Use single service utensils where possible; or
- Use potable water (as described above) to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils.

In the kitchen:

The use of mechanical dishwashers may not be safe during a Drinking Water Advisory. Watch for media reports or consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team to determine if the use of mechanical dishwashers is appropriate.

- Using potable water (as described above), ensure proper manual dishwashing is followed if utensils must be washed by hand. Refer to the **"Dishwashing - 3 Sink Method"** poster for direction.

In the facility:

- Use potable water (as described above), to mix with chemical disinfectants used in environmental cleaning.

Medical Procedures

- ❑ Use potable water (as described above) for any procedures that use the facility water supply.

For returning to normal operations after the water supply is restored, refer to the factsheet **"Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption"** for guidance.

For further information, or assistance in planning for or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Child Care Centres During a Power Outage

This fact sheet is a guideline only. It is important to listen for media reports and watch for notifications from the health unit with specific information regarding the power outage.

- ✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
  AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
  FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

Where do I start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your facility.

Cold Holding - Refrigeration

A refrigerator without power will keep food cold for 4-6 hours as long as the door is kept closed. The length of time is dependent on the temperature of the room and the temperature of the fridge before the power outage.

Immediately:

- **Record** the time the power outage began.
- **Monitor** and record food temperatures every 2 hours with a probe thermometer.
- **Add ice to the refrigerators** to maximize the time the food stays cold.
- **Minimize** refrigerator opening.

Start planning for:

- **Relocation** of food to a refrigerated truck, an alternate location unaffected by the power outage, or to portable coolers.
- **Immediate Use** of Potentially Hazardous Foods that have risen into the Danger Zone (above 4°C/40°F) but have been there for less than 2 hours.
- **Discarding food.** Potentially Hazardous Foods that have been stored above 4°C/40°F for more than 2 hours need to be discarded. Refer to the factsheet **"What do I Save and What do I Throw Away When the Power is Out"** for guidance.

Dry Ice – If you are considering the use of dry ice, be aware of the safe handling requirements. Refer to the factsheet **"Dry Ice Safety"** for guidance.

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Cold Holding - Frozen

- A full freezer will keep food frozen about 2 days if the freezer is kept closed.
- A half-loaded freezer will keep food frozen about half a day if the freezer is left closed.

Immediately:

- **Keep freezers closed.**
- **Add ice to the freezer** and add additional insulation, covering the freezer with blankets, to assist in keeping the food frozen longer.

Start planning for:

- **Relocation of frozen food** to a freezer truck, or an alternate location unaffected by the power outage.
- **Thawing of food.** Potentially hazardous foods that have thawed but the temperature has not increased to above 4°C/40°F can be safely cooked and eaten or cooked and refrozen.
- **Refreezing of partially thawed foods**. As a general rule, if there are ice crystals in the food, and there are no obvious signs of spoilage, then it's safe to quickly refreeze. Do not refreeze thawed ready-to-eat foods.
- **Discarding food.** Any food that has completely thawed and has been sitting at room temperature for more than 2 hours or an unknown period of time, needs to be discarded.

Mechanical Ventilation

Immediately:

- Discontinue interior cooking that produces steam, smoke and grease laden vapours.

Cooking

Immediately:

- **Discard** potentially hazardous foods that were in the cooking process but did not reach a safe final cooking temperature unless cooking can be completed immediately by an alternate method.

Start planning for:

- **Obtaining an alternate heat source** for cooking.
- **Never use charcoal or gas barbecues or propane fueled appliances indoors.**

Hot Holding

Immediately:

- **Record** the time the power went out.
- **Monitor** hot holding temperatures hourly.

Start planning for:

- **Obtaining an alternate heat source** for hot holding.
- **Discarding food**. All potentially hazardous foods that have been held in the Danger Zone (below 60°C/140°F) for more than 2 hours must be discarded.

Utensil Washing

Immediately:

- ❑ **Use single service tableware** if utensils can not be adequately washed and sanitized.
- ❑ **Use the 3-compartment sink method** for manual dishwashing. Refer to the **" Dishwashing – 3 Sink Method"** poster for guidance.

Lighting

Immediately:

- ❑ **Restrict activities** to those that can be safely conducted in natural light whenever possible.

Start planning for:

- ➢ Providing an alternate sources of lighting. Candles are not recommended, use flashlights instead.

Hot Water

Immediately:

- ❑ Heat small amounts of water on a natural gas or propane appliance.
- ✗ Never use charcoal or gas barbecues or propane fueled appliances indoors.

Safety Notes: Exercise caution when boiling water around young children.

- Wait for boiled water to cool to at least 49°C/120°F before allowing it to touch a child's skin.
- Boil water on the back burners of your stove to keep it farther from children's reach.

Air Conditioning

Heat-related illnesses can develop within a short period of time when exposed to extreme heat.

Immediately:

- ❑ Have drinking water available for all children.
- ❑ Keep shades drawn and blinds closed on the sunny side of your facility.

Start planning for:

- ➢ **Monitoring of children** for signs and symptoms of heat-related illness.
- ➢ **Cooling** with a cool bath, shower or cool down with cool, wet towels. Refer to the factsheet **"Heat Alert Guidelines for Child Care Centres"**

Heat

Immediately:

- ❑ **Conserve body heat** by dressing warmly in layers and using blankets.

Start planning for:

- ➢ **Locating an alternate heat source**.
- ➢ **Creating an emergency heated area** within your facility. Refer to the factsheet **"Staying Warm in an Unheated House: Coping with a winter power outage"** for guidance.

Well pump (if applicable)

Immediately:

- **Obtain a supply of potable water. Refer to the Fact Sheet** "Guidelines for Childcare Centres during a Water Interruption".

Sewage Pump (if applicable)

Immediately:

- **Discontinue all operations.** If the sewage pump is not functional, continuing to use water in the facility will result in sewage backing-up into the lowest fixtures. Contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team for assistance.

For further information, or assistance in planning for or responding to a power outage, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Child Care Centres During a Water Interruption

An interruption is when no water is provided to the facility. In some situations, an interruption in water supply may lead to the issuance of a Boil Water Advisory once the water supply returns.

Important: If your water has been interrupted, even for a short time, you should confirm the safety of the water supply with the water utility or the Health Unit prior to resumption of use.

This factsheet is a guideline only. Special procedures may be necessary and additional instructions may be provided. Watch for media reports and notifications from the Health Unit.

- ✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
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Where do I start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your institution.

Drinking Water

Immediately:

- **Secure** a supply of potable (drinkable) water by:
  - **Using commercially bottled water.**
  - **Hauling water** from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container or arranging for the use of a licensed drinking water hauling truck.

Food Preparation and Cooking

- Restrict menu to items that need little or no water to prepare.
- Use commercially bottled water, water hauled from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, or water from a licensed drinking water hauling truck.

Important: All water used to wash and prepare fruits and vegetables, and any water used as an ingredient in a ready-to-eat food product (coffee, juice, jello, ice etc.) must be from one of the sources described above.

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Handwashing

- Heat potable water (as described above) and place into an insulated container with a spigot that allows clean, warm water to flow over the hands. Provide liquid soap in a dispenser and paper towels as usual.
- Follow-up with an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Refer to Fact Sheet **"The Use of Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers"** for guidance.
- Post handwashing directions at all sinks.

Diapering

- Use disposable gloves to change diapers and wash hands with potable water (as described above) and follow-up with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when complete.
- Wash children's hands with potable water (as described above) or use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer. Refer to the Fact Sheet "**The Use of Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers"** for guidance.
- Disinfect the diapering area between children with an **intermediate-high level** chlorine disinfecting solution. Refer to the **"Mixing of Chlorine (Bleach) Solution for Disinfection"** sheet for guidance.

Water for Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Use single service utensils where possible; or
- Use potable water (as described above) to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils.
- Ensure proper manual dishwashing is followed. Refer to the **"Dishwashing - 3 Sink Method"** poster for instructions.

Note: Food preparation in a facility must be discontinued when cleanliness of the physical facility jeopardizes food safety.

Water to Flush Toilets

- Create an Emergency "Toilet Room" within the facility that has an alternate source of water available for manual flushing. Non potable water may be used for this purpose but the water containers must be clearly marked with **"Non potable water. This water is unsafe to drink."**
- Flush the toilet by dumping a bucket of water into the toilet bowl all at one time. This will clear the bowl.

The facility must cease operation and close if:

- There is no water available for drinking or handwashing
- Food can not be safely prepared and served
- Proper cleaning and sanitizing can not be acheived
- The water interruption has made safe operation of the facility impossible

For returning to normal operations after the water supply is restored, refer to the factsheet **"Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption"** for guidance.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infection Control Team at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

HEAT ALERT GUIDELINES FOR CHILD CARE CENTRES

The Medical Officer of Health issues a Heat Alert when one or more of the following criteria are met:

- The forecast is showing a humidex advising of 40° Celsius or higher.
- The humidex is forecast to rise to 36° Celsius or higher, combined with an Environment Canada Smog Alert.
- Environment Canada issues a humidex warning for outdoor activity for people in the Middlesex-London area.
- High temperatures without a humidex reading equal 38° Celsius or above.

Recommendations

1. Establish both a policy and plan to deal with extreme temperatures.
2. Staff should be aware of signs and symptoms of heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Follow first aid procedures promptly.
3. Staff should role model appropriate sun safety behaviours for children.
4. Ensure indoor temperatures are comfortable; offer regularly scheduled rest periods.
5. Limit time in the sun when UV Index (ultraviolet ray strength) is most intense, between 11 am – 4 pm.
6. Sunscreens/insect repellent are not recommended for infants under 6 months of age. Keep babies under 1 year of age out of direct sunlight.
7. Ensure all children wear a wide brimmed hat (or with back flap), UV protective sunglasses, light and loose fitting clothing.
8. Apply sunscreen SPF 15 (or higher) 20-30 minutes before going outside to ensure absorption.
9. When using DEET insect repellent, apply 20-30 minutes after sunscreen has been applied.
10. Check regularly on infants and young children; ensure children are well hydrated (plain water is the liquid of choice; diluted fruit juice is acceptable).
11. **NEVER** leave children or pets in a closed parked vehicle.
12. Monitor children in wheelchairs in regards to the equipment metal, vinyl and heat.
13. Check heat of metal slides, monkey bars etc. in playground areas.

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The Middlesex-London Health Unit recommends that childcare providers recognize the signs of heat-related illness, and follow first aid treatments:

SIGNS OF HEAT ILLNESS	TREATMENT
Sunburn: redness, pain, swelling of skin, blisters, fever and headaches.	**What to do:** leave water blisters intact to speed healing and avoid infection, if breaking of blister occurs, apply dry sterile dressing. Serious cases should be seen by a physician.
Heat Cramps: painful muscle spasms usually in the legs but possible in abdomen; heavy sweating.	**What to do:** apply firm pressure on cramping muscles or gently massage to relieve spasm; give sips of water, if nausea occurs discontinue sips of water, move person to a cooler place to rest in a comfortable position. Observe the person carefully for changes in condition.
Heat Exhaustion: heavy sweating, weakness, cold, pale and clammy skin; weak pulse, fainting and vomiting, core temperature usually 38.8° Celsius or higher, but normal temperature is possible.	**What to do:** get person out of sun, move person to a cooler environment, lay person down and loosen clothing, apply cool wet cloths, give sips of water, if nausea occurs, discontinue sips of water; if vomiting continues, seek immediate medical attention.
Heatstroke: a severe medical emergency, high body temperature (41° Celsius or higher), hot, dry skin, rapid and strong pulse, possible unconsciousness.	**What to do:** Call 911. Do not give fluids If unable to get person to medical helpimmediately, do the following: • Move person to a cooler environment • Remove outer clothing • Reduce body temperature using lukewarm (not cold) water to bathe/sponge the person

For more information about how to recognize and prevent heat-related illness
Please visit www.healthunit.com
Or call 519-663-5317 Ext. 2300

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

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.

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.

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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

The facility must cease operation and close if:

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

For further information, or assistance in planning for power and water disruptions, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Returning to Normal Operation after a Power Outage in Child care Centres

This fact sheet is a guideline only. Watch for media reports and situation specific information from the local utility and the Health Unit.

- ✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
  AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
  FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

- ❑ **When power is restored**,

- ❑ **Assess the safety of potentially hazardous foods** –
  - ❑ Refer to the factsheet **"What do I Save and What do I Throw Away When the Power is Out"**
  - ❑ Watch for media reports from the municipalities that outline the preferred methods for food disposal.
    - ➢ Small volumes of food may be discarded at the curbside for municipal pick-up.
    - ➢ Large volumes of food may need a disposal company for transportation to the landfill.
  - ❑ Ensure that all equipment is functioning properly.
    - ❑ Refrigeration – less than 4°C/40°F
    - ❑ Hot holding units
    - ❑ Dishwashers
    - ❑ Ventilation systems
    - ❑ Lighting
    - ❑ Hot water heater

- ❑ Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces prior to resuming normal activities.

- ❑ Drain and refill hot water tanks where the temperature of the water delivered to the faucet has dropped below 45°C/120°F.

- ❑ **Private Water Supply** (if applicable) - Facilities designated under *Ontario Regulation 170/03 – Drinking Water Systems.*
  - ❑ If you think that your water system has been affected by a loss of pressure during the power outage (odour, colour change, sputtering) contact the Ministry of the Environment Spills Action Centre at 1(800) 268-6060 before using the water for drinking or food preparation.
  - ❑ If the power outage has not affected your water system, increase the chlorine residual (if applicable) to 0.2 ppm and flush the system until the increased residual is detected at the farthest point in the distribution system and obtain a water sample for bacteriological analysis. You may continue to use the water for drinking and food preparation.

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For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a power outage, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption in a Child Care Centre

This fact sheet is a guideline only. Watch for media reports and situation specific information from the local utility and the Health Unit.

- ✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
  AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
  FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

In some situations, an interruption in water supply may lead to the issuance of a Boil Water Advisory once the water supply returns.

Important: If your water has been interrupted, even for a short time, you should confirm the safety of the water supply with the water utility or the Health Unit prior to resumption of use. It is the responsibility of the facility operator to ensure that normal operations can be resumed without compromising safety.

When water is restored,

- ❑ Flush pipes and faucets – Generally, run the faucets for at least one minute before use. Be sure to watch for media reports from the water utility or the Health Unit with any special directions.

- ❑ Flush, clean and sanitize all equipment connected to the water system, according to manufacturer instructions.

If applicable:
- ❑ Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- ❑ Consult with the manufacturer for direction on how to restart water treatment systems.
- ❑ Drain and refill hot water tanks set below 45°C/120°F. (The standard temperature setting is 60°C/140°F).
- ❑ Drain water reservoirs in large buildings in consultation with the facility engineer.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infection Control Team at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

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MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Be Prepared! Power or Water Disruptions in Long-Term Care Homes

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 residents of your home. The following are some things to consider when you are planning for emergency situations.

Power Disruption

- ❑ Develop a plan to minimize loss of food products held frozen or under refrigeration.
  - ➢ Consider access to an electrical generator that can be used to operate critical pieces of equipment such as refrigeration units, or
  - ➢ Plan to obtain 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, or
  - ➢ 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.
- ❑ Prepare an emergency menu that includes recipes for food items that require little or no cooking since kitchen exhaust systems will not be functional.
- ❑ Plan for an alternate supply of food for your facility if you are unable to continue with food preparation. Alternate supplies may include canned food, dry food, or food brought from another approved source.
- ❑ Plan for maintaining the Cold Chain for your onsite vaccines.
- ❑ Plan for continued operation of medical devices that use electricity.

Water Disruption

- ❑ Plan an emergency menu with food items that need little or no water to prepare.
- ❑ Stock an inventory of single-use items including plates, bowls, cups and utensils, a supply of bottled water, containers suitable for hauling water, and alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- ❑ Develop a business relationship with a bottled water supplier and /or a licensed water hauler to provide the facility with water during an emergency.
- ❑ Plan for loss of toilet use for both residents and staff. (Guidance is included in the Fact Sheet **"Guidelines for Long Term Care Homes During a Water Interruption"**)
- ❑ Create a list of equipment that uses water, and develop a plan of what will happen with each during a water disruption.

Communication

- ❑ Have a battery-powered radio available for media updates of situation.
  In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on:
  AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
  FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX
- ❑ Have a list of emergency contact numbers available.

If power and water are lost for an extended period, you should develop a plan for the relocation of residents to unaffected locations.

For further information, or assistance in planning for power and water disruptions, contact a member of the Infection Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

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MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Long-Term Care Homes During a Boil Water Advisory

The Medical Officer of Health issues a boil water advisory when the water is unsafe for drinking based on:

- results of bacteriological testing, or
- an occurrence of illness in the community that has been linked to consumption of the water, or
- other information indicating that the water is unsafe to drink, or
- as a precaution if there is a loss of pressure in the water system.

This factsheet is a guideline only. Special procedures may be necessary and additional instructions may be provided. Watch for media reports and notifications from the Health Unit. The Boil Water Advisory remains in effect until the Medical Officer of Health lifts it.

✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

Where do I start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your home.

Drinking Water

Immediately:

- **Secure** a supply of potable (drinkable) water by:
  - **Boiling the water**. Water should be brought to a rolling boil and boiled for 1 minute, allowed to cool and stored in a covered sanitized container; or
  - **Using commercially bottled water;** or
  - **Hauling water** from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container or arranging for the use of a licensed drinking water hauling truck; or
  - **Chlorinating small batches of water**. To chlorinate, add 1.25mL (1/4 tsp.) liquid household bleach to 4.5L (1 gallon) of water. Mix and let stand for 30 minutes. Use regular household bleach (5% sodium hypochlorite). Do not use scented bleach, bleach with added cleaners or alternative bleaches.

- Shut off drinking water fountains.
- Disconnect all equipment directly plumbed to the water system (ice machines, soft drink machines, coffee machines etc.).
- Post signs at all faucets, in the kitchen area, and in washrooms to advise of the boil water advisory and not to drink the water.

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Important: Take special care with residents who have cognitive deficiencies that may impair their understanding of the boil water advisory procedures.

Water for Food Preparation and Cooking

Immediately:

- Discard ready-to-eat food that was prepared with potentially unsafe water prior to the issuance of the Boil Water Advisory (coffee, juice, jello, ice etc.) If you are unsure of which foods to discard, consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team.
- Restrict menu to items that require little or no water, and little preparation.
- Use potable water (as described above) for food preparation activities.

Important: All water used to wash and prepare fruits and vegetables, and any water used as an ingredient in a ready-to-eat food product must be from one of the sources described above.

Handwashing

- Heat potable water and place into an insulated container with a spigot that allows clean, warm water to flow over the hands. Provide liquid soap in a dispenser and paper towels as always and
- It is recommended to follow-up with an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Refer to Fact Sheet **"The Use of Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers"** for guidance.
- Post handwashing directions at all sinks.

Personal Hygiene

- Teeth brushing and denture care must be completed with potable water (as described above).
- Unless otherwise specified by the Health Unit, bathing may continue as long as residents do not consume the water and their skin is intact.

Water for Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Use single service utensils where possible; or
- Use potable water (as described above) to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils.

In the kitchen:

- Commercial dishwashers that use hot water 82°C (180°F) or above for the final rinse may continue to be used. Ensure units are functioning adequately. Low temperature dishwashers that use chemical sanitizers may not be effective against water contaminated with parasites.
- If you are unsure of the reason for the Boil Water Advisory, consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team.
- Using potable water (as described above), ensure proper manual dishwashing is followed if utensils must be washed by hand. Refer to the **"Dishwashing - 3 Sink Method"** poster for direction.

In the facility:

- Use potable water (as described above), to mix with chemical disinfectants used in environmental cleaning.

In the personal service setting:

- Use potable water (as described above), to mix with chemical disinfectants used in cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces, scissors, combs/brushes, nail clippers etc.

Laundry

- Continue with current laundry practices.
- Ensure that laundry staff has access to potable water for handwashing.

Medical Procedures

- Use potable water as described above for any procedures that use the facility water supply.

Public Pool or Spa

Initially:

- Close pools and spas.
  - Depending on the reason for the issuance of the Drinking Water Advisory, operation of pools and spas may not be recommended. Watch for media releases, or consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team, to determine if operating the pool or spa during the Drinking Water Advisory is appropriate.

If it is determined to be safe to use the pool or spa,

- Ensure adequate disinfection levels are maintained
  - Pool minimum 0.5ppm chlorine residual
    minimum 2.0ppm bromine residual
  - Spa maintain 5-10ppm chlorine or bromine residual
- Operate pool in compliance with *Public Pools, RRO 1990, Reg.565* and the spa in compliance with *Public Spas O.Reg 428/05.*

Enhance Surveillance for Enteric Illness

- Follow standard enteric precautions and outbreak management protocols for residents with diarrheal illness. Notify the Health Unit as soon as possible if residents or staff develop enteric illness. Initiate testing to determine the pathogen involved.
- Staff with enteric illness symptoms must be excluded from work. They must not return until they have been symptom-free for at least 24 hours. If the boil water advisory is issued as a result of a community outbreak, a 48-hour exclusion, and/or negative stool samples may be necessary before returning to work. For specific outbreak direction, consult with the Health Unit.

For returning to normal operations after the boil water advisory is lifted, refer to the factsheet **"Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption"** for guidance.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Long-Term Care Homes During a Drinking Water Advisory

Important: Be sure you know what kind of advisory has been issued.

The Medical Officer of Health issues a Drinking Water Advisory when the water has been determined unsafe for drinking and the problem **can not** be corrected by boiling. Drinking Water Advisories may be issued for chemical contamination of water supplies. A drinking water advisory is different from a boil water advisory.

This fact sheet is a guideline only. It is important to listen for media reports and watch for notifications from the Health Unit with specific information regarding the drinking water advisory. Special precautions may be necessary depending on the nature of the contamination.

✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

Where do I start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your institution.

Drinking Water

Immediately:

- **Secure** a supply of potable water by:
  - **Using commercially bottled water.**
  - **Hauling water** from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container or arranging for the use of a licensed drinking water hauling truck.
  - x **Do not boil water.** Boiling may concentrate chemical contaminants.

- Shut off drinking water fountains.
- Disconnect all equipment directly plumbed to the water system (ice machines, soft drink machines, coffee machines etc.).
- Post signs at all faucets, in the kitchen area, and in washrooms to advise of the drinking water advisory and not to drink the water.

Important: Take special care with residents who have cognitive deficiencies that may impair their understanding of the drinking water advisory procedures.

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Water for Food Preparation and Cooking

Immediately:

- Discard ready-to-eat food that was prepared with potentially unsafe water prior to the issuance of the Drinking Water Advisory (coffee, juice, jello, ice etc.) If you are unsure of which foods to discard, consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team.
- Restrict menu to items that require little or no water, and little preparation.
- Use commercially bottled water, water hauled from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, or water from a licensed drinking water hauling truck for food preparation activities.

Important: All water used to wash and prepare fruits and vegetables, and any water used as an ingredient in a ready-to-eat food product must be from one of the sources described above.

Handwashing and Personal Hygiene

Important: Watch for notifications from the Health Unit with specific information regarding the nature of the drinking water advisory. In some cases, the water may not be suitable for <u>any</u> personal use.

- Unless special instructions have been released, wash hands as usual.
- If an alternate source of potable water (as described above) must be used for handwashing, post directions at all sinks.
- Teeth brushing and denture care must be completed with potable water (as described above).
- Unless special instructions are provided, bathing may continue as long as residents do not consume the water.

Water for Cleaning and Sanitizing

Important: Watch for notifications from the Health Unit with specific information regarding the nature of the drinking water advisory. In some cases, the water may not be suitable for <u>any</u> cleaning or sanitizing.

- Use single service utensils where possible; or
- Use potable water (as described above) to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils.

In the kitchen:

The use of mechanical dishwashers may not be safe during a Drinking Water Advisory. Watch for media reports or consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team to determine if the use of mechanical dishwashers is appropriate.

- Using potable water (as described above), ensure proper manual dishwashing is followed if utensils must be washed by hand. Refer to the **"Dishwashing - 3 Sink Method"** poster for direction.

In the facility:

- Use potable water (as described above), to mix with chemical disinfectants used in environmental cleaning.

In the personal service setting:

- Use potable water (as described above), to mix with chemical disinfectants used in cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces, scissors, combs/brushes, nail clippers etc.

Medical Procedures

- Use potable water (as described above) for any procedures that use the facility water supply.

Public Pool or Spa

Initially:

- Close pools and spas.
  - Depending on the reason for the issuance of the Drinking Water Advisory, operation of pools and spas may not be recommended. Watch for media releases, or consult with a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team, to determine if operating the pool or spa during the Drinking Water Advisory is appropriate.

If it is determined to be safe to use the pool or spa,

- Ensure adequate disinfection levels are maintained and
  - Pool minimum 0.5ppm chlorine residual
    minimum 2.0ppm bromine residual
  - Spa maintain 5-10ppm chlorine or bromine residual
- Operate pool in compliance with *Public Pools, RRO 1990, Reg.565* and the spa in compliance with *Public Spas O.Reg 428/05.*

For returning to normal operations after the drinking water advisory is lifted, refer to the factsheet **"Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption"** for guidance.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Long-Term Care Homes During a Power Outage

Listen for media reports for situation updates and specific instructions.

- ✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
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  FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

Where Do I start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements.

Cold Holding - Refrigeration

Food - A refrigerator without power will keep food cold for 4-6 hours, as long as the door is kept closed. The length of time is dependent on the temperature of the room and the temperature of the fridge before the power outage.

Immediately:

- ❑ **Record** the time the power outage began.
- ❑ **Monitor** and record food temperatures every 2 hours with a probe thermometer.
- ❑ **Add ice to the refrigerators** to maximize the time the food stays cold.
- ❑ **Minimize** refrigerator opening.

Start planning for:

- ➢ **Relocation** of food to a refrigerated truck, an alternate location unaffected by the power outage, or to portable coolers.
- ➢ **Immediate Use** of Potentially Hazardous Foods that have risen into the Danger Zone (above 4°C/40°F) but have been there for less than 2 hours.
- ➢ **Discarding food.** Potentially Hazardous Foods that have been stored above 4°C/40°F for more than 2 hours need to be discarded. Refer to the factsheet **"What do I Save and What do I Throw Away When the Power is Out"** for guidance.

Dry Ice – If you are considering the use of dry ice, be aware of the safe handling requirements. Refer to the factsheet **"Dry Ice Safety"** for guidance.

Vaccines – Vaccines are sensitive biological substances that can lose their potency and effectiveness if they are exposed to temperatures outside of the required range of +2°C to +8°C.

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Immediately :

- **Keep refrigerators where vaccines are stored closed**.
- **Monitor temperatures**. Record the time and internal temperature (maximum-minimum and current) of the non-functioning refrigerator (as soon as possible after the start of the electricity disruption) in the vaccine temperature logbook and reset the thermometer. Continue to monitor temperature at regular intervals. Remember to reset the thermometer each time you check it.

Start Planning for:

- **Relocation of the vaccine** to a functioning, monitored refrigerator or cooler.
- **Transportation** of the vaccine in your insulated vaccine bag with ice packs.

If you are concerned with the temperature exposure of your vaccine supply after a power outage, store the vaccines in a bag marked “Do Not Use” in a functioning, monitored refrigerator until you have consulted with a representative from the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330.

Cold Holding - Frozen

- A full freezer will keep food frozen about 2 days.
- A half-loaded freezer will keep food frozen about half a day if the freezer is left closed.

Immediately:

- **Keep freezers closed.**
- **Add ice to the freezer** or add additional insulation, covering the freezer with blankets, to assist in keeping the food frozen longer.

Start planning for:

- **Relocation of frozen food** to a freezer truck, or an alternate location unaffected by the power outage.
- **Thawing of food.** Potentially hazardous foods that have thawed but the temperature has not increased to above 4°C/40°F can be safely cooked and eaten or cooked and refrozen.
- **Refreezing of partially thawed foods**. As a general rule, if there are ice crystals in the food, and there are no obvious signs of spoilage, then it's safe to quickly refreeze. Do not refreeze thawed ready-to-eat foods.
- **Discarding food.** Any food that has completely thawed and has been sitting at room temperature for more than 2 hours or an unknown period of time, needs to be discarded.

Mechanical Ventilation

Immediately:

- Discontinue interior cooking that produces steam, smoke and grease laden vapours.

Cooking

Immediately:

- ❑ **Discard** potentially hazardous foods that were in the cooking process but did not reach a safe final cooking temperature unless cooking can be completed immediately by an alternate method.

Start planning for:

- ➢ **Obtaining an alternate heat source** for cooking.
- ✗ **Never use charcoal or gas barbecues or propane fueled appliances indoors.**

Hot Holding

Immediately:

- ❑ **Record** the time the power went out.
- ❑ **Monitor** hot holding temperatures hourly.

Start planning for:

- ➢ **Obtaining an alternate heat source** for hot holding.
- ➢ **Discarding food**. All potentially hazardous foods that have been held in the Danger Zone (below 60°C/140°F) for more than 2 hours must be discarded.

Utensil Washing

Immediately:

- ❑ **Use single service tableware** if utensils can not be adequately washed and sanitized.
- ❑ **Use the 3-compartment sink method** for manual dishwashing. Refer to the **" Dishwashing – 3 Sink Method"** poster for guidance.

Lighting

Immediately:

- ❑ **Restrict activities** to those that can be safely conducted in natural light whenever possible.

Start planning for:

- ➢ **Providing an alternate sources of lighting.** Candles are not recommended, use flashlights instead.

If you must use candles,

- ✗ Do not burn candles on or near anything that can catch fire.
- ✗ Never leave burning candles unattended and extinguish candles when you leave the room.
- ✓ Keep burning candles away from drafts.

Hot Water

Immediately:

- ❑ Heat small amounts of water on a natural gas or propane appliance.
- ✗ Never use charcoal or gas barbecues or propane fueled appliances indoors.

Air Conditioning

Heat-related illnesses can develop within a short period of time when people are exposed to extreme heat. The elderly are very susceptible to heat-related illness.

Immediately:

- ❑ Have drinking water available for all residents and encourage residents to drink often.
- ❑ Keep shades drawn and blinds closed on the sunny side of your facility.
- ❑ Open windows to encourage cross-breezes.

Start planning for:

- **Monitoring of residents** for signs and symptoms of heat-related illness.
- **Cooling of residents** with a cool bath, shower or application of cool, wet towels.
- **Relocation** to air-conditioned spaces if possible even for a short period of time. Refer to the factsheet **"Heat-Related Illness"** for guidance.

Heat

Immediately:

- **Conserve body heat** by dressing residents warmly in layers and using blankets.

Start planning for:

- **Locating an alternate heat source**.
- **Creating an emergency heated area** within your facility. Refer to the factsheet **"Staying Warm in an Unheated House: Coping with a winter power outage"** for guidance.

Circulation system for pool or spa

Immediately:

- **Close pool and/or spa**.

Start planning for:

- **Re-opening** the pool in compliance with *Public Pools, RRO 1990, Reg.565* and the spa in compliance with *Public Spas O.Reg 428/05.*

Well pump (if applicable)

Immediately:

- **Obtain a supply of potable water.**
- Refer to the Fact Sheet **"Guidelines for Long Term Care Homes during a Water Interruption"**

Sewage Pump (if applicable)

Immediately:

- **Discontinue all operations.** If the sewage pump is not functional, continuing to use water in the facility will result in sewage backing-up into the lowest fixtures. Contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a power outage, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Guidelines for Long-Term Care Homes During a Water Interruption

An interruption is when no water is provided to the home. In some situations, an interruption in water supply may lead to the issuance of a Boil Water Advisory once the water supply returns.

Important: If your water has been interrupted, even for a short time, you should confirm the safety of the water supply with the water utility or the Health Unit prior to resumption of use.

This factsheet is a guideline only. Special procedures may be necessary and additional instructions may be provided. Watch for media reports and notifications from the Health Unit.

- ✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
  AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
  FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

Where do I Start?

Identify a "Person-in-Charge" who will be responsible for ongoing management of the emergency situation and ensure ongoing compliance with safety requirements for your home.

Drinking Water

Immediately:

- **Secure** a supply of potable (drinkable) water by:
  - **Using commercially bottled water.**
  - **Hauling water** from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container or arranging for the use of a licensed drinking water hauling truck.

Water for Food Preparation and Cooking

- Restrict menu to items that need little or no water to prepare.
- Use commercially bottled water, water hauled from another unaffected approved public water supply in a covered sanitized container, or water from a licensed drinking water hauling truck.

Important: All water used to wash and prepare fruits and vegetables, and any water used as an ingredient in a ready-to-eat food product (coffee, juice, jello, ice etc.) must be from one of the sources (as described above).

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Handwashing

- Heat potable water and place into an insulated container with a spigot that allows clean, warm water to flow over the hands. Provide liquid soap in a dispenser and paper towels as usual.
- Follow-up with an alcohol based hand sanitizer. Refer to Fact Sheet **"The Use of Alcohol Based Hand Sanitizers"** for guidance.
- Post handwashing directions at all sinks.

Water for Cleaning and Sanitizing

- Use single service utensils where possible; or
- Use potable water (as described above) to clean and sanitize equipment and utensils.
- Ensure proper manual dishwashing is followed. Refer to the **"Dishwashing - 3 Sink Method"** poster for instructions.

Note: Food preparation in a facility must be discontinued when cleanliness of the kitchen jeopardizes food safety.

Water to Flush Toilets

- Arrange for portable toilets to be delivered to the facility and/or
- Create an Emergency "Toilet Room" within the facility that has an alternate source of water available for manual flushing. Non potable water may be used for this purpose but the water containers must be clearly marked with **"Non potable water. This water is unsafe to drink."**
- Flush the toilet by dumping a bucket of water into the toilet bowl all at one time. This will clear the bowl.

Pool and Spa Operation

- Close pools and spas for use until water service is restored.

For returning to normal operations after the water supply is restored, refer to the factsheet **"Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption"** for guidance.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Returning to Normal Operation after a Power Outage in Long-Term Care Homes

This fact sheet is a guideline only. Watch for media reports and situation specific information from the local utility and the Health Unit.

✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

When power is restored,

- **Assess the safety of potentially hazardous foods** –
  - Refer to the factsheet **"What do I Save and What do I Throw Away When the Power is Out"**
  - Watch for media reports from the municipality that outline the preferred methods for food disposal.
    - Small volumes of food may be discarded at the curbside for municipal pick-up.
    - Large volumes of food may need a disposal company for transportation to the landfill.
  - Ensure that all equipment is functioning properly.
    - Refrigeration – less than 4°C/40°F
    - Hot holding units
    - Dishwashers
    - Ventilation systems
    - Lighting
    - Hot water heater

- Clean and sanitize all food contact surfaces prior to resuming normal activities.

- Drain and refill hot water tanks where the temperature of the water delivered to the faucet has dropped below 45°C/120°F.

- **Vaccine Safety** (if applicable) - If you are concerned with the temperature exposure of your vaccine supply after a power outage, store the vaccines in a bag marked "Do Not Use" in a functioning, monitored refrigerator until you have consulted with a representative from the Middlesex-London Health Unit.

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- **Private Water Supply** (if applicable) - Facilities designated under *Ontario Regulation 170/03 – Drinking Water Systems.*
  - If you think that your water system has been affected by a loss of pressure during the power outage (odour, colour change, sputtering) contact the Ministry of the Environment Spills Action Centre at 1(800) 268-6060 before using the water for drinking or food preparation.
  - If the power outage has not affected your water system, increase the chlorine residual (if applicable) to 0.2 ppm and flush the system until the increased residual is detected at the farthest point in the distribution system and obtain a water sample for bacteriological analysis. You may continue to use the water for drinking and food preparation.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a power outage, contact a member of the Infectious Disease Control Team at the Middlesex- London Health Unit at 663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

MIDDLESEX-LONDON HEALTH UNIT

FACT SHEET fact sheet

Returning to Normal Operation after a Water Disruption in a Long-Term Care Home

This fact sheet is a guideline only. Watch for media reports and situation specific information from the local utility and the Health Unit.

- ✓ **In Middlesex-London emergency updates can be found on**:
  AM Band : 980 CFPL, 1070 CHOK, 1290 CJBK, 1410 CKSL
  FM Band : 92.7 CJBK, 9305 CBCL, 94.7 CREC, 94.9 CHRW, 95.9 CFPL, 97.5 CIQM, 100.5 CBBL, 101.3 CKOT, 102.3 CHST, 103.1 CFHK,103.9 CKDK, 106.9 CIXX

In some situations, an interruption in water supply may lead to the issuance of a Boil Water Advisory once the water supply returns.

Important: If your water has been interrupted, even for a short time, you should confirm the safety of the water supply with the water utility or the Health Unit prior to resumption of use. It is the responsibility of the facility operator to ensure that normal operations can be resumed without compromising safety.

When water is restored,

- ❑ Flush pipes and faucets – Generally, run the faucets for at least one minute before use. Be sure to watch for media reports from the water utility or the Health Unit for any special directions.

- ❑ Flush, clean and sanitize all equipment connected to the water system, according to manufacturer instructions.

If applicable:
- ❑ Run water softeners through a regeneration cycle.
- ❑ Consult with the manufacturer for direction on how to deal with swimming pool and spa pumps and filters.
- ❑ Consult with the manufacturer for direction on how to restart water treatment systems.
- ❑ Drain and refill hot water tanks set below 45°C/120°F. (The standard temperature setting is 60°C/140°F).
- ❑ Drain water reservoirs in large buildings in consultation with the facility engineer.

For further information or assistance in planning for, or responding to a water disruption, contact a member of the Infection Control Team at the Middlesex-London Health Unit at 519-663-5317 ext. 2330 or at www.healthunit.com

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