



VFC PROGRAM ALERT #1

January 19, 2012 – 2 pages

TO: Vaccine Manager, VFC Agreement Signatory, Clinic Manager
FROM: Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program, Public Health-Seattle & King County
TEL: (206) 296-4774, FAX: (206) 205-5780

POWER OUTAGE PLAN

If you have access to your clinic/vaccines and the power is out:

- Follow your emergency vaccine storage plan, if safe and feasible, and transfer vaccine to your back-up location.

If it is not possible to "activate" your emergency plan:

- Monitor refrigerator and freezer temperatures. Try not to open the refrigerator/freezer any more than is absolutely necessary. Under normal circumstances, each compartment of the refrigerator should be able to maintain in-range temperatures for up to 3-4 hours.
- If MMR is stored in the refrigerator, move it to the freezer immediately. Freezer storage is safe for MMR and is, in fact, preferred.
- If/when refrigerator temperature exceeds 46F, here are a few options:
 - Follow your emergency vaccine storage plan and transfer vaccine to the backup location (if that location has power) **OR**
 - Pack refrigerated vaccines in a styrofoam cooler as illustrated in the following diagram, **OR**
 - Take vaccines from the top shelf and move them to a lower shelf; remove a few icepacks from the freezer and place them on the top shelf of the refrigerator. The thermometer sensor should be in the center of the second shelf. Close the door and monitor temperature closely--do not expose refrigerated vaccines to temperatures below 35F! **OR**
 - If the freezer temperature has reached 35-46F, refrigerated vaccines can be moved into the freezer compartment; leave the varicella vaccine in the freezer too, but keep track of the number of hours it is stored at above-range temperatures. DO NOT move refrigerated vaccines into the freezer if the compartment's temperature is still below 35F. DO NOT leave refrigerated vaccines in the freezer overnight because the power may be restored in your absence.
- Remember to move refrigerated vaccines out of the freezer once the power is restored.
- Keep track of the number of hours and highest temperature reached for any vaccines not stored as recommended. Prepare a list of vaccines exposed to out-of-range temperatures, with lot numbers and expiration dates. This information will be necessary to evaluate vaccine viability. Please always check with Public Health before making decisions about vaccine storage safety.

Please call the VFC Program at 206-296-4774 with any immediate questions. On Thursday, after 3PM, call 206-402-7322.