

ALERT: Power Failures and Vaccine Handling

May 21, 2013

In the event of a power failure of the refrigeration unit:

1. If available, transport vaccine to a functioning refrigeration unit that is monitored (maximum and minimum temperatures are between 2°C and 8°C and are documented twice daily).
2. Check and record the maximum, minimum and current temperature.
3. If the maximum temperature was <2°C or >8°C, call the Health Unit and provide:
 - a. the name of your facility/office;
 - b. phone number;
 - c. name of person reporting incident;
 - d. refrigeration temperatures (current, maximum, minimum) and time it was checked;
 - e. vaccine stock (i.e. Pentacel, Engerix, MMR, etc.); and
 - f. temperatures (current, maximum, minimum) and time it was last checked *before the power failure*
4. **Do not use or discard vaccine until assessed by the Health Unit.**

During a power failure:

1. Do not open the refrigerator because this will let any cool air out and warm air in. Only open the fridge to continue routine vaccine temperature monitoring (morning and afternoons).
2. Document maximum and minimum temperatures twice daily.
3. Try to keep the ambient temperature in the premise low by closing window blinds.

When power is restored:

1. Document the time and date when the power returns and the temperature of the vaccines (maximum and minimum).
2. Continue to read and record maximum and minimum temperatures twice daily.
3. Call the Health Unit, 705-743-1000, to assess vaccine stability before using vaccine.

For more information, contact:

Vaccine Preventable Diseases Program
705-743-1000, ext. 139

Dr. Rosana Pellizzari, MD, MSc, CCFP, FRCPC
Medical Officer of Health