



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
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Bureau of Immunization
42-09 28th Street, CN21
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Dear Colleague:

In advance of the anticipated blizzard, we want to remind you of the procedures to ensure the viability of your vaccine supply in the event of the loss of electricity.

Please note that all Vaccines for Children (VFC) program vaccine shipments by Merck and McKesson have been suspended.

If you experience a loss of power to your vaccine storage unit, take the following steps:

1. Keep all refrigerators and freezers closed during the power outage. **DO NOT OPEN THE UNITS TO CHECK THE TEMPERATURE** until power is restored. If there is an alternative storage unit with reliable power sources, you may transfer the vaccines to that unit.
2. If possible, continue to monitor temperatures of the refrigerator and freezer, but do not open the units to do this. If this is not possible, then record the temperature as soon as possible after power is restored. In addition, document the duration of the power outage. This will provide information about the maximum temperature the vaccines were exposed to and the duration of such exposure.
3. Do not discard any vaccines.
4. When power has been restored, clearly mark these vaccines and do not use them until you are able to consult with the vaccination manufacturers or the Bureau of Immunization (BOI). Continue to store the vaccines at recommended temperatures in the event that they are still viable.
5. Call the vaccine manufacturers at their toll-free numbers for guidance about vaccine use: GSK 888-825-5249; Merck 800-672-6372; Sanofi Pasteur 800-822-2463; Pfizer 800-438-1985; Novartis 800-244-7668; and MedImmune 877-633-4411. For vaccines supplied by BOI, you must also notify the VFC program at 347-396-2400. If the power outage is of short duration, most of the vaccines will still be viable.
6. If any vaccines are determined not to be viable, instructions will be provided about how to return the vaccines.

For more information, please refer to the VFC Vaccine Management Plan at:
<http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/imm/imm-vaccine-mgmt-plan.pdf>
or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at:
<http://emergency.cdc.gov/poweroutage/pdf/poweroutage-vaccinestorage.pdf>

If vaccination of a patient is deferred because of vaccine loss, use a log, the Citywide Immunization Registry or other tracking system to recall your patients once replacement vaccines are available.

For assistance with determining whether your vaccines can be used, or for professional or technical questions, please call the BOI at 347-396-2400. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc
Assistant Commissioner