



Wednesday, January 15, 2025

## Vaccine Management Following an Emergency or Power Outage, Clinic Operation Status Survey, and Need for Additional Vaccine Supply

Dear Provider,

The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Immunization Branch's thoughts go out to those affected by ongoing wildfires and power outages. For providers affected by the wildfires in the Los Angeles region, we had temporarily halted Vaccines for Children (VFC), Vaccines for Adults (VFA), Bridge Access Program (BAP), State General Fund (SGF), and Local Health Department (LHD 317) vaccine shipments in LA County, including the health jurisdiction of Pasadena. Vaccine shipments for the affected areas will resume once conditions allow or if clinics have notified us that they are ready to receive vaccines.

If your clinic has been directly affected by the wildfires, we would appreciate that you answer a few questions on this [short survey](#), to notify us of your clinic's current status.

If your clinic is closed due to the fires, please submit a temporary clinic closure form through your myCAVax account. The purpose of submitting a temporary clinic closure is so that the CDPH Immunization Programs are aware that your clinic is not ready to receive vaccines at this time. For more information on how to submit a temporary clinic closure, please refer to this [job-aid](#) after logging in to myCAVax. Alternatively, we can help with updating your clinic location's status. VFC Providers can contact the VFC Program at (877) 243-8832 or email [myVFCvaccines@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:myVFCvaccines@cdph.ca.gov), while all other programs (BAP, SGF, LHD 317, VFA) can contact the Provider Call Center at (833) 502-1245 or email [ProviderCallCenter@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:ProviderCallCenter@cdph.ca.gov).

The following information can help you prepare and respond to an emergency or a power outage.

## **RECEIVE NOTIFICATIONS**

If you have not yet registered with your utility company's and county's emergency contact list to receive alerts or notifications, sign up as soon as possible.

## **VACCINE MANAGEMENT PLAN**

To ensure that your clinic is prepared during an emergency or power outage, review your [Vaccine Management Plan](#) with your staff and update information if necessary. It is a program requirement that your staff review and update the plan at least annually, and that regular vaccine transport drills are conducted to maintain competency and readiness for emergencies.

## **RESPOND**

Depending on the emergency, prepare to respond accordingly. However, you should never risk your own safety, or that of your staff, to transport vaccines during an emergency. Only relocate your vaccines if safe to do so. Staff safety comes first.

## **ALTERNATE VACCINE STORAGE LOCATION**

Your Vaccine Management Plan should include an alternate location to temporarily store your vaccines during an emergency. The alternate location must have storage units and temperature monitoring devices that meet [CDPH Program vaccine storage requirements](#). Do not transport vaccines to your place of residence, as household storage units do not typically meet the requirements needed to properly store vaccines. You may want to consider places with a back-up generator (e.g., hospitals, retail pharmacies, large healthcare providers with generator power). Keep in mind, if an entire city or county is affected by a natural disaster or is within the same power grid and is out of power, other providers may be seeking to store their vaccines at the same location.

## **VACCINE STORAGE UNITS & TRANSPORT SUPPLIES**

Maintain enough thermal mass in your vaccine storage units to maintain temperatures in the event of a loss of power. You can achieve sufficient thermal mass by adding water bottles to your refrigerator (including pharmaceutical or laboratory grade units) and ice packs to your freezer. Refer to the [Setting Up Vaccine Storage Units](#) job aid for more information.

Before an emergency, check to make sure that you have the proper supplies and materials needed (hard-sided cooler, cold packs or frozen water bottles, insulating cushioning material, data logger) for vaccine transport. The [Vaccine Management Plan](#) template has a useful checklist to help you prepare for planned or unexpected situations.

## **BACK-UP POWER SOURCES**

Although not required, locations in high fire danger areas or experiencing frequent Public Safety Power Shutoff (PSPS) incidents may want to consider:

1. Utilizing vaccine storage equipment that can maintain temperatures for days. Prior to purchasing these types of units, review the detailed specifications to ensure that they meet [CDPH Program vaccine storage requirements](#) for vaccine storage.
2. Having a back-up source of power, such as a battery power system or commercial generator. Prior to purchasing, consider your clinic's power and installation needs. For generators, clinics should ensure they are ready to safely operate.
3. Having qualified pack-out containers or vaccine carriers for vaccine transport. These types of units maintain temperatures for multiple days utilizing phase-change material technology.

## **VACCINE TRANSPORT**

Not all emergencies require that you move and transport vaccines to an alternate location. Monitor temperatures to determine any actions needed. If vaccines are not transported properly, you may risk spoiling the vaccines, thus making them non-usable. If vaccine transport is indicated, feasible, and safe, follow the [Transporting Refrigerated Vaccine](#) and [Transporting Frozen Vaccine](#) job aids for detailed information, and document the vaccine and temperature information on the [Vaccine Transport Log](#). Utilize your back-up data logger(s) to monitor temperatures during transport.

## **RESTORE**

Once the emergency is over and power is restored, transport the vaccines back to your clinic following the same guidelines for refrigerated and frozen vaccine transport. Review the vaccine storage unit temperature of the alternate location and temperatures during transport by downloading the data logger reports. If vaccines remained at the clinic and were not transported to an alternate site, download and review the data logger reports.

If the vaccines were exposed to any out-of-range temperatures during storage or transport, report the incident in your [myCAvax](#) account, and follow instructions given by the system.

## **VACCINE SUPPLY**

If your vaccine supply was deemed non-viable as a result of the fires or power outages, and your clinic is currently operational and can receive vaccines, an urgent order may be processed for your practice. Submit your order through [myCAvax](#) and indicate in the comments if an urgent order is needed due to the

fires. Urgent orders processed before 1:00 pm Monday through Thursday would arrive the following business day. Keep in mind, clinic staff are expected to be available all day to receive the urgent shipment, regardless of your regular vaccine delivery hours.

### QUESTIONS?

For VFC questions, please reach out to the VFC Program at [myVFCvaccines@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:myVFCvaccines@cdph.ca.gov) or call 877-243-8832. For all other programs, please contact the Provider Call Center at [ProviderCallCenter@cdph.ca.gov](mailto:ProviderCallCenter@cdph.ca.gov) or call (833) 502-1245.

Thank you,

California Department of Public Health, Immunization Branch

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