

Choose Safe Places For Early Child Care and Education

How to complete the voluntary Property Checklist

Completing the voluntary Property Checklist will help you collect information to determine whether there could be sources of environmental contamination near your potential child care facility. This information will provide guidance on actions to take (if needed) to make sure that your property is safe for your future business.



Four key elements of safe child care locations:



Former uses of a site that might have left harmful substances.

Not all previous use will present a problem for current child care sites. Identifying those sites with a previous use that might lead to harmful environmental exposures is critical for protecting children and your business.



Movement of harmful substances onto the site from other sites.

Contamination may come from a source nearby, such as a gas station or a hair/nail salon, and move onto the child care site through air, water, and soil.



Presence of naturally occurring harmful substances.

Naturally occurring contamination, such as arsenic in soil or groundwater, can be as hazardous as contamination from human activities.



Access to safe drinking water.

Clean drinking water is essential for children's health. Drinking water can become contaminated through various sources and activities, such as old plumbing or use of fertilizers.

The questions in the Property Checklist cover the four key considerations for choosing a safe site for a child care. Please answer all questions to the best of your ability. If you do not know the answers to any of the questions, we recommend you talk with:

- The property owner
- Local public health district – You can find your local health department contact information at: <http://www.idahopublichealthdistricts.org/>
- Regional office of the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality – You can find your regional DEQ office at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/>
- Town/county planner or zoning office
- Town engineer or building department

Questions or Concerns:

Contact the Idaho Division of Public Health Environmental Health Program at 1-800-445-8647.

Choose Safe Places For Early Child Care and Education

Idaho Early Childcare Property Checklist



Choosing the right location for your child care business is essential for success. There's more to consider than cost and classroom size. Completing this checklist can help to identify and consider the potential environmental concerns of a site before making an investment. This tool can help you protect children, your employees, and your business investment by assessing a potential location for environmental concerns before you commit.

- 1) When was the building constructed? _____ (To find this information, contact your real estate agent or county assessor's office.)
- ☐ **After 1978** – Good!
- ☐ **Before 1978** – **Caution!** There may be lead-based paint or asbestos present. This can be a risk if the property has not been properly maintained. Look for chipping/peeling paint and dust on the interior or exterior of the building. Also, look for damage to pipes wrapped with solid insulation materials.
- ✓ Have a certified lead based paint inspector test the building before you commit. The inspector will help you determine if lead is present and if there are any health risks. Visit <https://bit.ly/2Uin8uP>.
- ✓ Have the building inspected by an accredited asbestos inspector before you commit. Visiting the Environmental Protection Agency's website at <https://www.epa.gov/asbestos>.
- 2) Has the property ever been used in the past for any of the following? Check box if yes.
- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Dry cleaner | ☐ Landfill/Dump | ☐ Gas station |
| ☐ Factory/Manufacturing/Industrial | ☐ Auto repair/Auto painting shop | ☐ Funeral Home |
| ☐ Metal plating | ☐ Shooting range | ☐ Farming/Agricultural |
| ☐ Hair salon/Nail salon | ☐ Other: _____ | |
- Details:** (How long ago was it used for this purpose? Was the property remediated or cleaned up?)
- _____
- _____
- For more information about the past use of a site, contact your city's planning office and/or zoning committee.
- 3) Have you seen anything on the property that makes you think that chemicals could have been used there in the past? You might see clues on site like old metal drums, machine parts, piles of junk, a loading dock, etc.
- ☐ **No** – Good!
- ☐ **Not sure** – **Caution!** Get more information before you commit. Town/county planners, tax assessors, and fire marshals can help you get historical records.
- ☐ **Yes** – **Caution!** These businesses may have left chemicals behind. Get more details (when, who, what products or chemicals) by contacting your town/county planner, tax assessor, and fire marshal.



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & WELFARE
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH

4) Are there nearby businesses (~200 ft radius) that currently use chemicals? Check box if yes.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ☐ Factory/Manufacturing/Industrial | ☐ Landfill/Dump | ☐ Gas station |
| ☐ Dry cleaner | ☐ Nail/Hair Salon | ☐ Auto repair/Auto painting shop |
| ☐ Metalworking | ☐ Shooting range | ☐ Copy/Print shop |
| ☐ Farming/Agricultural | ☐ Other _____ | |

Details: (How far away is the business from your location? Is it in the same building? Does it share an HVAC system, or common space with your location?)

☐ **No – Good!**

☐ **Not sure – Caution!** Get more information before you commit. Walk around the building to see what is nearby.

☐ **Yes – Caution!** Chemicals might be moving into the property through the air, water, or soil. Does the site share an HVAC system, storage areas, outside space, an attic or basement with your location? Contact your Department of Environmental Quality 's Regional Office at <http://www.deq.idaho.gov/regional-offices-issues/>

5) Has the building ever been tested for radon?

☐ **Yes, with results below 4.0 pCi/L – Good!** Radon levels can change over time, so make sure to test again every 5 years.

☐ **No – Have this test done before you commit.** Visit www.radonidaho.org for more information. Idaho residents can purchase discounted testing kits from Air Chek by calling 1-800-247-2425.

☐ **Yes, levels of radon at or above 4.0 pCi/L – Caution!** Radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the U.S. Get help with follow-up tests and/or a mitigation system. Call the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare's Indoor Environment Program at 1-800-445-8647 or visit www.radonidaho.org

6) Where does the drinking water come from?

☐ **Public drinking water supply – Great!** Call your water supplier to get a copy of the annual water quality report before considering further testing. Visit <http://bit.ly/IDwater> for more information about drinking water in Idaho.

☐ **Private Well – Caution!** Private wells can be contaminated from outside sources. Visit the Idaho Department of Water Resources website at <https://bit.ly/2AQU4mD> or call your local public health district at <http://www.idahopublichealthdistricts.org/>

✓ Have the water tested by a laboratory before you commit, and budget for testing the water annually. Contact your [local public health district](#) or the Idaho Bureau of Laboratories at (208) 334-2235 or <http://bit.ly/IBLwater> for more information.

✓ Have the well professionally inspected before you open up your business. Contact your local public health district for more information.

7) Where does sewage go?

☐ **Municipal wastewater – Good!**

☐ **Septic System – Caution!** Septic systems require upkeep and are usually designed for standard household use. An updated or enlarged system may be needed to meet the demands of your child care facility.

✓ Find out how old the system is and when it was last serviced. Check the design to make sure that your child care business won't overload the system's capacity. Your local public health district <http://www.idahopublichealthdistricts.org/> and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality <http://bit.ly/DEQseptic> can help you with permitting, inspections, and site evaluations.