



Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education

Planning. Guidance. Protection.



Set It Up Safe in New Hampshire: New Early Care and Education Program Facilities

The New Hampshire Choose Safe Places (NH CSP) for Early Care and Education program has developed a voluntary Property Checklist to help you collect information and see if there could be environmental contamination near your potential child care facility. Even if a child care program meets all current licensing regulations, it may be located in a place where children and staff can unknowingly come in contact with dangerous chemicals. It also provides guidance on what you may need to do to make sure the property is safe and stays safe. Completing this voluntary Property Checklist is also a good idea for facilities that are reopening, changing capacity or activity usage, or making additions (i.e. adding an outdoor playground or pool).

The voluntary Property Checklist includes questions that cover the four key considerations for choosing a safe place for child care. It can help you protect children, your employees and your future business.

Four key considerations for choosing a safe child care location:

1. Former use of the site.



Some industries use harmful chemicals. If they're not cleaned up properly before the location is used for early care and education, it can put children and staff at risk of harmful health effects.

2. Nearby sites and activities.



Environmental contamination may come from a nearby location or business, such as a gas station, dry cleaner, or a hair/nail salon. Chemicals can move through air, water, and soil and onto the child care site.

3. Naturally occurring contamination.



Environmental contamination can occur naturally, such as arsenic in soil or groundwater, or radon in indoor air. It can be as dangerous as contamination from human activities.

4. Access to safe drinking water.



Clean drinking water is essential for the health of children and staff. Drinking water can become contaminated from a variety of sources and activities, such as old plumbing or the use of fertilizers.

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.

Please answer all questions to the best of your ability. If you do not know the answers, we recommend you talk with one of the following:

- The current property owner.
- Town/county clerk's office.
- Town/county planner or zoning office.
- The NH CSP team.

To submit your completed checklist, ask a question, or share a concern, email a completed PDF to:

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After you submit the checklist, the NH CSP team will confirm your submission and request additional information if necessary. Then, your completed checklist will be reviewed using publicly available databases to screen the location for potential environmental hazards that could harm children or staff. The results of this evaluation will be shared with you. This may include some recommendations to consider before moving ahead with your plans. The team will be happy to review your results with you and answer any questions you may have.

For more information about environmental contamination and how to protect your community from its effects, please visit our parent webpage at: [NH APPLETREE](#).

New Hampshire Choose Safe Places Voluntary 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.

Applicant Contact Information:

Name: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Child Care Location Information:

Address: _____

The child care is:

- Not licensed/prospective
- Licensed/active

1. Have any of the following documents ever been prepared for the child care property?

- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Phase II Environmental Site Assessment
- Phase III Environmental Site Assessment
- Unknown

If yes, are they available?

- Yes
- No
- Unknown

2. What year was the building constructed? _____

To find this information, contact your real estate agent or town assessor's office.

- After 1978 – Good!**
- Before 1978 – Caution! Get more information.**

There may be lead-based paint or asbestos present. Lead and asbestos can both harm health if the property has not been properly maintained. Buildings constructed before 1978 may have lead-based paint. Beginning July 1, 2024, all pre-1978 properties being converted into rental housing will be required to have a *Lead Safe Certificate* issued by a licensed New Hampshire Risk Assessor prior to occupancy (see [RSA-A 130-A:5-d](#)). Look for chipping or peeling paint and dust on the inside and outside of the building. In buildings constructed before 1985, look for damage to pipes wrapped with solid insulation materials that may contain asbestos.

What you can do

- Have a certified lead-based paint inspector test the building before you commit. The inspector will help you determine if lead is present, if there are any health risks and how you can make it safe. Information for [finding a licensed lead-based paint inspector](#).
- Have the building inspected by an accredited asbestos inspector before you commit. Information for [finding a licensed asbestos inspector](#).

3. Has the property ever been used previously for the following purposes? Check box if yes.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dry cleaner | <input type="checkbox"/> Landfill/Dump |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Factory/Manufacturing/Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Shooting range |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Metal plating | <input type="checkbox"/> Auto repair/Auto painting shop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hair salon/Nail salon | <input type="checkbox"/> Funeral home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas station | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Farming/Agricultural | |
- No boxes checked – Good!**
- Not sure – Caution! Get more information.** Town/county planners, tax assessors and fire marshals can help you get historical records. You can also visit the [NHDES OneStop Navigation tool](#) to search for property history and related information.
- Yes – Caution!** These businesses may have left chemicals behind.

What you can do

Provide additional details below. How long ago was the property used for this purpose? Was the property remediated or cleaned up?

4. 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 like old metal drums, machine parts, piles of junk, a loading dock, etc.

- No - Good!**
- Not sure - Caution! Get more information.** Town/county planners, tax assessors and fire marshals can help you get historical records. You can also visit the [NHDES OneStop Navigation tool](#) to search for property history and related information.
- Yes - Caution!** These items mean that chemicals may have been left behind.

What you can do

Get more details (when, who, what products or chemicals) by contacting your town/county planner, tax assessor and/or fire marshal.

5. Are any of the following businesses nearby (~200 ft radius)? Check box if yes.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Factory/Manufacturing/Industrial | <input type="checkbox"/> Metalworking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landfill/Dump | <input type="checkbox"/> Shooting range |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gas station | <input type="checkbox"/> Copy/Print shop |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dry cleaner | <input type="checkbox"/> Farming/Agricultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nail/Hair salon | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Auto repair/Auto painting shop | |
- No boxes checked – Good!**
- Not sure – Caution! Get more information.** Walk around the building to see what is nearby.
- Yes – Caution!** Chemicals might be moving into the property through the air, water or soil.

What you can do

Provide additional details below. 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?

6. Has the building ever been tested for radon?

- Yes, with results below 4.0 pCi/L – Good!**
- No or Unsure – Caution! Get more information and have this test done before you commit.** You can find more information about [testing for radon](#), and start by getting a [free radon test kit](#).
- 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.

What you can do

Get help with follow-up tests and/or a mitigation system. You can find more information on how to lower radon levels by [exploring mitigation options](#).

7. Where does the drinking water come from?

New Hampshire law (RSA 485:17-a) requires all licensed child care programs to sample for lead in drinking water at outlets where water is available for consumption by children. Examples of drinking water outlets include drinking fountains, classroom sinks and kitchen fixtures. Sampling is required whether a facility's water comes from a well or a town/city public water system. For more information visit:

[NHDES Resources for Schools and Child Care Programs](#)

- City/Town Public water system – Get more information.** For more information on public water systems visit [NHDES Public Water Systems](#).
- Private well serving 25 or more people – Get more information.** These facilities are also regulated as public water systems and are **required** to perform regular testing to meet federal and state health-based standards.
- Private well serving less than 25 people – Get more information.** These facilities are NOT considered public water systems. The most critical aspects of drinking water safety for these facilities are addressed by the [New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services' \(DHHS\) Child Care Licensing Unit](#).

8. 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. If a system is already in place, your town/city should have records with useful information. You can also visit the [NHDES OneStop Navigation tool: Septic Systems](#) to search for a property's septic system history and related information.

What you can do

- 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.

9. Is there any other important information to know about the location? Do you have any other questions or concerns that were not addressed in the checklist?

Disclaimer

This survey collects information about the current and former uses of your proposed property and the properties nearby. The information gathered will help the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) identify risks posed by environmental hazards at your property and provide guidance on actions to take if a hazard(s) is identified. Recommendations made by the NH CSP Program are based on publicly available data and information at the time of the screen. For this reason, NHDES cannot guarantee all possible environmental hazards will be identified. If remediation, follow-up testing, or other work is conducted as a result of NHDES recommendations, NHDES is not responsible for costs associated with those activities. Note that data submitted by the participant or produced by NHDES during the site screening process is considered public information. Thus, if requested, NHDES cannot withhold the information from any party. Submittal of this survey constitutes a voluntary enrollment in the NH CSP Program and an understanding of these program limitations and responsibilities.

Thank you for completing the voluntary Property Checklist.