

**North Carolina Department of  
Environment And Natural Resources**

**Division of Environmental Health**

Michael F. Easley, Governor  
William G. Ross, Jr., Secretary  
Linda C. Sewall, Director  
Michael U. Rhodes, Section Chief



September 12, 2002

**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Local Environmental Health Supervisors, Directors, and Coordinators

**FROM:** Larry D. Michael, RS, MPH, Environmental Specialist  
Children's Environmental Health Branch

**THROUGH:** Ed Norman, MPH, Program Supervisor  
Children's Environmental Health Branch

**SUBJECT:** Water-Saving Measures for Child Care Centers Under Emergency  
Restrictions

Due to the current drought and water restrictions endured by many counties in the state, our office has received a number of requests concerning water-saving measures specific to child care centers. Below is a list of water-saving measures that child care providers may implement under emergency conditions.

- For handwashing activities, wash with soap and water when the hands are visibly dirty or contaminated with proteinaceous material, **or** if hands are not visibly soiled, use an alcohol-based hand-sanitizing gel for cleaning hands. However, for diaper changing activities and immediately prior to eating, preparing and serving food, handwashing **must** be conducted using soap and water even under emergency water restriction conditions.
- Discontinue water play activities.
- Defrost foods in the refrigerator or microwave rather than under running water.
- Use single service eating and drinking utensils.
- Obtain food and beverages in ready-to-use forms (e.g., canned, ready-to-cook).
- Use pre-washed, canned, or frozen fruits and vegetables.
- Obtain ice from commercial ice plants.
- Use bottled drinking water.
- Check all fixtures for leaks.
- Install water-conserving fixtures and components (e.g., high efficiency faucet aerators).
- If equipped, use water-saving features on appliances.
- Only run dishwashers and washing machines when full or send laundry to commercial facilities.
- Use brooms and blowers to clean off sidewalks and driveways.

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- Avoid using kitchen sink garbage disposals--put the garbage in the garbage can.
- Double-bag garbage to avoid breakage or leakage in cans and dumpsters.

Child care centers are advised to check with the Division of Child Development prior to initiating these measures to ensure that they are not violating any licensing provisions. Also, please remember that the above water-saving measures are intended for temporary use in emergency situations; however, some of these measures may be continued to promote water conservation under normal operating conditions.

Please direct questions or comments to me at (919) 718-0837, [Larry.Michael@ncmail.net](mailto:Larry.Michael@ncmail.net) or Ed Norman at (919) 715-3293, [Ed.Norman@ncmail.net](mailto:Ed.Norman@ncmail.net).

cc: Environmental Health Listserv