

Oregon's Choose Safe Places



About the checklist

Oregon's Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education is a non-regulatory program that helps to ensure that childcare programs are located in safe places so that children are not exposed to harmful chemicals during their care. This program is operated by the Oregon Health Authority through funding from the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

Fill out this checklist to gather information about potential sources of exposure and assess whether there could be harmful chemicals at or near your childcare facility. We will contact you when we receive your checklist to provide guidance on how to decrease your exposure to harmful chemicals and answer your questions. Visit our website to learn more about our program: www.HealthOregon.org/choosesafeplaces.

Directions

1. Answer all of the questions to the best of your ability. If you prefer, you can fill out an online version of this checklist by scanning this QR code with your phone or tablet's camera or by visiting our website: www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/TRACKINGASSESSMENT/Pages/Oregon-Choose-Safe-Places.aspx.
2. Contact us if you need help filling in the gaps on questions you are unable to answer by emailing Oregon.CSP@dhsoha.state.or.us.
3. Return the completed checklist to us by emailing Oregon.CSP@dhsoha.state.or.us or mailing it to:

Oregon Health Authority, Public Health Division

Attn: Oregon Choose Safe Places Program
800 NE Oregon St., Suite 640
Portland, OR 97232



Thank you for taking the time to complete this checklist. Your efforts will help ensure the health and safety of children where they learn and play!

Four key elements of safe siting locations

The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) created the Choose Safe Places for Early Care and Education program to encourage thoughtful consideration about where to locate childcare facilities.

You can determine whether the location of a childcare facility is affected by harmful chemicals from nearby sources or past activities by considering these four key elements:



Former uses of your property

Your property may have previously been used for activities that left behind harmful chemicals.



Movement of harmful substances

Contamination can come from a nearby source and move onto your property through air, water, and soil.



Presence of naturally occurring harmful substances

Naturally occurring contamination, such as radon or arsenic in soil or groundwater, can be hazardous.



Access to safe drinking water

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

Considering these four elements can help assure that you, your staff, and the children in your facility are spending time in a safe and healthy location. Visit our website to learn more: www.HealthOregon.org/choosesafeplaces.



Oregon Choose Safe Places Provider Checklist

Facility Name: _____
Address: _____
Contact Person Name: _____
Email: _____
Phone: _____
Preferred Language: _____

1. **Are there any businesses nearby (~200 feet) that use chemicals as part of their normal operations?** Circle all that may apply. If you're not sure about this, get more information by walking around the building to see what is nearby.

We are asking this question because it's important to know if nearby businesses are using certain kinds of chemicals that could move onto your property through air, water, or soil.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|
| Dry cleaner | Landfill/Dump | Funeral home |
| Factory/Industrial/
Manufacturing | Auto repair/Auto
painting shop | Farming/Agricultural |
| Metalworking | Shooting range | Copy/Print Shop |
| Hair salon/Nail salon | Gas station | Other: _____ |

No – Good!

Yes – Caution! Find out if your facility shares a heating/cooling (HVAC) system, storage areas, outside space, attic, or basement with the business.

Unsure? The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) tracks sites in Oregon with known or potential contamination from hazardous substances using the Environmental Cleanup Site Information (ECSI) database. Visit the ECSI database here: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/env-cleanup/Pages/ecsi.aspx>.

Additional details: How far away is the business from your building? Is it in the same building complex? Does it share a heating/cooling system or a common space with your location?

2. **Is your property close to a railyard or a major roadway?** A railyard is a place where there are several parallel railroad tracks used for loading, storing, and sorting trains.

Cars and trains release chemicals that may reduce the air quality on your property and potentially impact human health. Health studies indicate that children who spend a lot of time near major roadways have increased risk for developing asthma and other respiratory issues.

- No – Good!**
- Yes, a railyard – Caution!** There are actions you can take to improve your air quality. Visit the Oregon CSP website for this information: www.HealthOregon.org/choosesafepaces.
- Yes, a major highway – Caution!** There are actions you can take to improve your air quality. Visit the Oregon CSP website for this information: www.HealthOregon.org/choosesafepaces.

Additional details: How far away is the railyard or major roadway from your building?
How busy is the railyard or roadway?

3. **What is the drinking water source at your property?**

Water supplies can be contaminated from outside sources. Properties using private wells to provide drinking water should be sure that the water is safe for children to drink.

- Public drinking water supply – Good!** Your water supplier conducts regular testing to ensure you have safe drinking water. You can contact them to obtain an annual water quality report if you are interested in viewing the results.
- Private well – Caution!** The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) recommends annual testing for private, or domestic, wells. Domestic well testing is the process of having an accredited laboratory test water from a private well for possible contaminants, with the most common being arsenic, nitrate, and total coliform bacteria. You can contact your local health department to determine what other contaminants may pose a risk at your property.

Visit OHA's Human Health & Well Water webpage for more information: <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/PH/HEALTHYENVIRONMENTS/DRINKINGWATER/SOURCEWATER/DOMESTICWELLSAFETY/Pages/Human-Health-Water.aspx>.

Additional details:

4. Do you use a wood burning stove to heat your property?

Smoke created from wood burning contains fine particles (also called particulate matter). These fine particulates can harm the lungs when inhaled.

No – Good!

Yes – Caution! Many types of older wood stoves provide warmth but may also release wood smoke that is harmful to health. It is recommended that old stoves be replaced or “changed out.” The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed the EPA Certified Wood Heater Database that contains information about residential wood heaters that meet new health-based standards. Visit the EPA website to find out if your stove meets EPA’s standards: <https://www.epa.gov/compliance/epa-certified-wood-heater-database>.

Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) provides some financial assistance to help residents replace old wood stoves with more efficient sources of heat that cause less pollution. Visit DEQ’s Wood Stoves webpage for more information: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Residential/Pages/Woodstoves.aspx#fawoodstoves>.

Additional details:

5. Has your building been tested for radon within the past five years?

Radon is the second-leading cause of lung cancer in the United States. Radon gas moves up through the soil and can be drawn into your building. Once inside, radon becomes trapped and can build up to unsafe levels.

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

No or I don’t know – Testing is highly recommended. Visit OHA’s Radon Gas and Public Health webpage for more information: www.healthoregon.org/radon. Some Oregonians are eligible for a free test kit.

- Yes, with levels of radon at or above 4.0 pCi/L — Caution!** Get help with follow-up test and/or a mitigation system by emailing OHA’s Oregon Radon Awareness Program: radon.program@state.or.us.

Additional details:

6. **What year was your building constructed?** _____

To find this information, refer to the property deed or contact your county assessor’s office. This information should also be saved with your childcare license application materials submitted to Oregon Early Learning Division’s Office of Child Care.

Caution: Buildings constructed before 1978 may contain lead-based paint

Exposure to lead-based paint and lead-contaminated dust is one of the most common causes of lead poisoning. Just a small amount of leaded dust—less than 1/16 of the amount in a sugar packet—can cause nerve and brain damage in children.

The federal government banned consumer use of lead-based paint in 1978. If your building was constructed before then, there is a good chance the paint still contains some lead. Lead-based paint hazards 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.

Caution: Residential buildings constructed before 2004 and all commercial buildings (regardless of construction date) may contain asbestos

Asbestos is a fibrous mineral that has been used in walls, ceilings, floors, roofs, siding, HVAC systems, insulation, pipes and more. Intact, asbestos-containing materials pose little or no danger. However, broken, worn, or damaged asbestos-containing materials release tiny hazardous fibers into the air, which may cause lung cancer and other illnesses. Any exposure to asbestos can cause harm.

Residential buildings constructed before 2004 and all commercial buildings (regardless of construction date) must have an asbestos survey conducted by an accredited inspector prior to any demolition activities.

Visit DEQ’s asbestos webpage for more information, asbestos survey requirements, and a list of licensed asbestos abatement contractors: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/Pages/Asbestos-Information.aspx>.

If you are concerned about potential environmental hazards from lead-based paint or asbestos:

- ✓ Have a certified Lead Risk Assessor test the building. The assessor will help you determine if lead is present and if there are any health risks.
- ✓ Have the building inspected by an accredited asbestos inspector.

Additional details:

7. **Has your property ever been used in the past for any of the following?** Circle all that may apply.

Your property may contain hazardous chemicals leftover from former businesses that used or disposed of them onsite. For more information about past use of a site, contact your city's planning office and/or zoning committee.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| Dry cleaner | Landfill/Dump | Funeral home |
| Factory/Industrial/
Manufacturing | Auto repair/Auto painting
shop | Farming/Agricultural
Copy/Print Shop |
| Metalworking facility | Shooting range | Other: _____ |
| Hair salon/Nail salon | Gas station | |
| Leather tannery | Fire station | |

Unsure? The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) tracks sites in Oregon with known or potential contamination from hazardous substances using the Environmental Cleanup Site Information (ECSI) database. Visit the ECSI database here: <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/Hazards-and-Cleanup/env-cleanup/Pages/ecsi.aspx>.

Additional details: How long ago was it used for this purpose? Has an environmental site assessment been conducted on your property? Was the property cleaned up to remove all hazardous substances?

8. **Have you ever seen anything on your property that makes you think that hazardous chemicals could be present or have been used there in the past?** You might have seen or see clues, like metal drums, discarded car parts, construction debris, burn areas, wildfire debris, farm equipment, areas where grass does not grow, concrete or metals plates coving a hole in the ground, or other manufacturing or industrial equipment.

Your property may contain hazardous chemicals leftover from former businesses that used or disposed of them onsite.

- No – Good!**
- Not Sure – Caution!** Get more information to ensure there are not hazardous chemicals present. Town/county planners, tax assessors, and fire marshals can help you get historical records.
- Yes – Caution!** Get more details (when, who, what products or chemicals) by contacting your town/county planner, tax assessor, and fire marshal.

Unsure? DEQ track sites with a known history of leaking underground storage tanks. You can check the history and status of your property using DEQ's Leaking Underground Storage Tank Cleanup Site Database: <https://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/tanks/lust/LustPublicLookup.asp>.

Additional details: What have you seen on the property that makes you think hazardous chemicals may be present?

9. **Is there anything else you want us to know?**

What's Next?

Thank you for completing this checklist! Please return it to us by emailing Oregon.CSP@dhsoha.state.or.us or by mailing it to:

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