

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS



Be Aware

Hazardous materials come in the form of explosives, flammable and combustible substances, poisons, and radioactive materials. These substances are most often released as a result of transportation accidents or because of chemical accidents in manufacturing plants.

Prepare

- ◆ **Discuss the potential for a hazardous material accident in your community. The risk is split between trucks and trains passing through your area and material stored in the area. Your local emergency management office can help you identify sites in your area where hazardous materials are stored or processed, what kind of materials they are and what risk they carry**
- ◆ **Review your family's evacuation plan. Make sure you understand the specialized procedures for responding to a hazardous materials accident (see below)**

Respond

- ◆ **If you witness or become aware of a hazardous materials accident, immediately call 9-1-1**
 - ◆ **Turn on your television or radio and follow directions exactly. Hazardous materials incidents often involve substances that you cannot see or smell. You may be exposed to a toxic chemical through breathing, touching, eating or drinking without being immediately aware of the exposure**
 - ◆ **Stay away from the incident site to avoid getting contaminated. If you are asked to evacuate, do so immediately**
 - ◆ **You may be instructed to stay indoors rather than evacuate. This is called sheltering-in-place. If told to shelter-in-place, immediately get inside your home or office and close and lock all windows and exterior doors**
 - ◆ **Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems. Close the fireplace damper**
 - ◆ **Get your family disaster supplies kit and make sure the radio is working**
 - ◆ **Go to an interior room with the fewest windows that's above ground level. In the case of a chemical threat, an above-ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air, and may seep into basements**
 - ◆ **Bring your pets with you, and be sure to bring additional food and water supplies for them**
 - ◆ **Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door and any vents into the room**
 - ◆ **Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate**
 - ◆ **Remember that instructions to shelter-in-place are usually provided for durations of a few hours, not days or weeks**
- There is little danger that the room in which you are taking shelter will run out of oxygen