

Chemicals are a part of our everyday lives. They help fuel our cars, keep our surroundings clean, and help keep our food fresh. Chemical emergencies can occur nearly anywhere chemicals are used, stored, or transported from one place to another. The best way to protect ourselves when an accident happens is to be prepared! Everyone should know what to do in a chemical emergency.

What to do in a Chemical Emergency

- Rely on and follow the instructions of your local police or fire officials. Listen to your radio or television for instructions.
- Stay off the telephone - do NOT call 911. Emergency officials will need clear telephone lines.
- **“Shelter-in-Place”** means to make a shelter where you are. Stay indoors in your home, workplace, or a nearby building. Once indoors, seal yourself in and do not leave until you are told it is safe to go out.
- If you are instructed to evacuate, stay calm and follow the instructions of the police or fire officials.



Shelter-In-Place Kit

It is important to take time to prepare your kit in advance. Pre-cut and label plastic sheeting for the windows and vents of your pre-selected room and collect the following items:

- Duct tape to seal the plastic sheeting



A flashlight with extra batteries

- A towel for sealing the bottom of the door



A battery-powered radio with spare batteries

- A few gallons of fresh water in closed containers



A few non-perishable food items - snack bars, candy, etc.

- A first-aid kit



A shelter-in-place emergency will probably last only a few hours at most, so enough food and water for a week is not necessary. Also, be sure to take any medicines with you to your preselected shelter room.

Shelter-In-Place

Follow these five steps when instructed to shelter-in-place:

1

Move people and pets indoors immediately.

2

Close and lock all windows and doors. (provides a tighter seal)

3

Turn off all heating, cooling, and ventilation devices including window and attic fans and anything that moves air in and out of the house. Also, close fireplace dampers.

4

Move everyone into one preselected room of the house. Use duct tape and precut heavy plastic to cover doors and windows to seal the room tightly. Place a wet towel at the bottom of the door to absorb gases that may leak into the house.

5

Turn on the radio or television to the local Emergency Alert System and wait for further instructions. Stay inside until you have been told that the danger has passed. After the emergency is over, open all doors and windows and go outside until the house or shelter is well ventilated.

What about Children at School ?

Although it is natural to wish to pick up your children from school in a chemical emergency, attempting to do so could just make matters worse. You and your children could be exposed to chemical hazards while traveling to and from school.

Children will be taken inside the school building during a chemical emergency and remain inside until the danger has passed. The best action to take is to follow the instructions of your local police or fire officials, and if directed, *stay where you are and shelter-in-place.*

Shelter-In-Place Works!

Sheltering-in-place is easy and quick. In a matter of moments, you can be safe inside your preselected room should a chemical emergency occur in your community. Sheltering-in-place limits your chances of being exposed to the airborne chemical hazard.

Sheltering-in-place was used effectively during the Gulf War of 1992. Israeli citizens sheltered-in-place to protect themselves from chemicals carried by Iraqi SCUD missiles.

Preselect a room in your home with few doors and windows for your family to shelter-in-place, and prepare your Shelter-In-Place Kit.

Local police or fire officials may direct you to shelter-in-place when:

- The chemical leak is of short duration.
- The chemical released has a low health hazard and its release isn't serious enough for evacuation.
- The danger could quickly overtake you if you are outside.
- There is not enough time to evacuate.

In a chemical emergency, follow the instructions of your local police or fire officials.

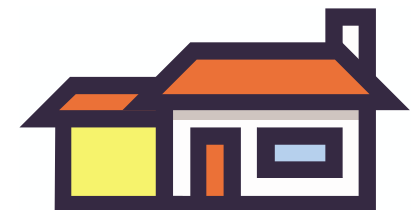


For More Information Contact:

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**Shelter
In
Place**



provided by your
Wichita County
Local Emergency Planning Committee