

## CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES

Chemicals are an enormous part of our every-day lives. Without the advancements made in chemistry, we would still be living in the middle ages. These technological advancements do come with a risk. Accidental hazardous materials spills do occur. When they happen, highly trained “HazMat” teams are quickly activated and the release is mitigated. Because of recent events, the risks are heightened because chemicals may be available to terrorists.

There are so many chemicals available in North America that it is simply impossible to list what could be used and how it would affect you if released. For that reason, it is important to educate yourself about community hazardous materials emergency procedures.

You would find out about the appropriate emergency procedure to follow by listening to your local Emergency Alert System radio station (see the Warning System page). In the event of a chemical emergency, there are three basic emergency procedures that you will be asked to follow.

### 1. Developing Emergency Situation – Stay Tuned for Official Information

This indicates that an emergency is taking place that may soon require you to take protective action. Citizens should monitor local “EAS” broadcasts for potentially fast-breaking developments.

### 2. Shelter In-place

Emergency personnel may determine that “in-place” sheltering is the best way to protect affected members of the public. Stay calm, listen carefully to instructions provided by the “EAS” broadcaster to make sure that the “shelter-in-place” order applies to you, and follow these instructions:

- Take your children and pets indoors immediately. While gathering your family, you can provide a minimal amount of protection to your breathing by covering your mouth and nose with a damp cloth.
- Close all windows in your home.
- Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems.
- Close the fireplace damper.
- Go to an above ground room (not the basement) with the fewest windows and doors.
- Take your Family Disaster Supply Kit with you.
- Wet some towels and jam them in the crack under the doors. Apply tape around the doors, windows, exhaust fans and vents. Use plastic garbage bags to cover windows, outlets, and heat registers.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains. To avoid injury, stay away from the windows.
- Stay in the room and listen to your radio until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate.