

3. Evacuation

Emergency personnel may determine that an evacuation is necessary. Stay calm, listen carefully to instructions provided by the “EAS” broadcaster to make sure that the evacuation order applies to you, and to find out if you should evacuate immediately or if you have a little time to pack some essentials. Do not use your telephone, and follow these instructions:

- Move quickly and calmly and take the following with you:
 - Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit
 - Medications
 - Change of clothing for each member of the family
 - Eyeglasses, hearing aids, dentures, canes and walkers
 - Baby care items
 - Personal items such as toothbrushes and deodorant

- Close and lock your windows

- Shut off all vents

- Lock the door and evacuate following the provided instructions, taking only one car if possible

Do not assume that a shelter will have everything you need. In most cases, the shelters will provide only emergency items such as meals, cots, and blankets. Also consider checking-in on neighbors to make sure they have been notified, and offer help to those with disabilities or other special needs.

NUCLEAR OR RADIOLOGICAL INCIDENT

The community’s response to a “dirty bomb” (an explosive device that disburse radioactive material) would be very similar to that of a chemical emergency response because the area affected by radiation would be relatively limited.

Although you may be asked to evacuate, nuclear power plant accidents and detonation of thermo-nuclear devices requires a different sheltering technique. The three factors for protecting oneself from radiation and fallout are distance, shielding, and time. The more distance between you and the incident location or the fallout particles, the better; the heavier and denser the building materials (shielding), the better; and fallout radiation loses its intensity fairly rapidly. In time, you would be able to leave your temporary shelter.

The severity and course of acute radiation sickness depends on how much total dose is received, how much of the body is exposed, and the sensitivity of the individual. Generally, large acute exposures can result in easily observable effects such as hair loss, changes in blood cells and vessels, skin irritation similar to severe sunburn, and gastrointestinal system effects including nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, and high fever. Long-term lower dose exposure can also create delayed effects such as cancer.

Should a radiological incident happen, keeping informed (see the Warning System page) and closely following official instructions are your keys to safety and survival. It is also important to know where to take shelter and how to perform basic fallout decontamination procedures.

Fallout contamination (dusty, flaky or small granular particles that fall from the sky following a significant nuclear event) is radioactive. Should fallout materialize, everyone should seek a safe shelter location, such as in the middle of a well-constructed building or in the center of a home’s basement (keep “distance” and “shielding” in mind). If someone is contaminated with fallout, they should decontaminate themselves by carefully removing contaminated clothing and thoroughly showering, if possible. It is also important to keep all contaminated clothing, including shoes, away from the temporary shelter location.