

Sheltering in Place

Most of us know to go to the basement when there's a tornado, and to get out quickly in case of fire. But would you know what to do if a dangerous chemical is released or spilled in your neighborhood?

Hazardous chemicals are all around us. They are used in factories and on farms, and are transported on our highways and rail lines. They can be solids, liquids or gases. While some can be seen and smelled, others may be invisible or odor free.

If a hazardous chemical is spilled or released into the air — either accidentally or with criminal intent — you may need to take protective actions until the spill is cleaned up or the gas cloud blows away.

In situations that require sheltering in place, you will be notified by the authorities in your community. You may hear an explosion, see a smoke or vapor cloud, or notice an unusual smell.

Listen to local TV and radio news broadcasts, or your NOAA all-hazards weather radio for instructions. If you are told to shelter in place, take action immediately.

- Go inside.
- Close and lock all doors and windows.
- Shut off any heating or cooling systems and close fireplace dampers.
- Gather people and pets in your shelter room and seal windows, doors and vents.

