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Shelter in Place For Business



Municipality of Anchorage
Office of Emergency Management

Anchorage Citizen Corps Program

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What to do
if a dangerous chemical is
spilled or released in
your community

Municipality of Anchorage
Office of Emergency Management

Shelter in Place

One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency where hazardous materials may have been released into the atmosphere is to **Shelter in Place**.

This precaution is aimed to keep you safe while remaining indoors. (This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm.) Shelter in place means selecting an interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire office building.

Why Shelter in Place

Chemical, biological, or radiological contaminants may be released accidentally or intentionally into the environment. Should this occur, local authorities will provide information on how to protect you and your coworkers.

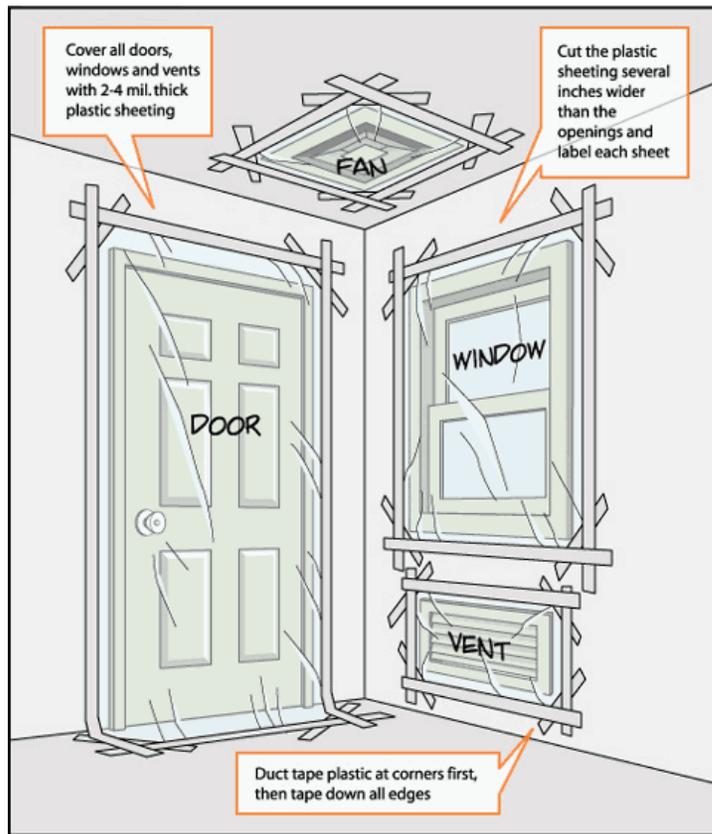
Because information will most likely be provided on television and radio, it is important to keep a TV or radio on during the workday. The important thing is for you to follow instructions of local authorities and know what to do if they advise you to shelter in place.

For More Information on Emergency Preparedness, contact the following agencies:

American Red Cross of Alaska
235 E 8th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501
907-646-5400
www.alaska.redcross.org

State of Alaska
Division of Homeland Security &
Emergency Management
P.O. Box 5750
Fort Richardson, Alaska 99505-5750
(907) 428-7000
www.ak-prepared.com

Federal Emergency Management Agency
Region X
130 228th Street, SW
Bothell, WA 98021-9796
425-487-4600
www.fema.gov



How will you know if there is a hazardous chemical emergency? Most often, you will be notified by the local authorities. However, you should take action if you notice any of the following:

- ◆ **An unusual smell or sound, such as an explosion**
- ◆ **Visible smoke, fire or a vapor cloud**
- ◆ **Skin or eye irritation**
- ◆ **Breathing difficulty**

Be Aware and Prepare

Local officials on the scene are the best source of information for your particular situation. Following their instructions during and after emergencies regarding sheltering, food, water and clean up methods is your safest choice.

For more information on hazardous chemical emergencies, contact your Municipality of Anchorage Office of Emergency Management at:
(907) 343-1401

How to Shelter in Place

Close the business. Bring everyone into the room. Shut and lock the door.

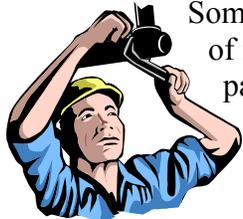
Customer safety. If there are customers or visitors in your building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay in the building and take shelter immediately.

Call emergency contacts. Unless there is an imminent threat, ask employees and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.

Turn on call-forwarding or alternative telephone answering system. Change voice mail to indicate that the business is closed and staff and visitors are remaining in the building until advised that it is safe to leave.

Close and lock all windows, exterior doors, and any other openings to the outside. If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains.

Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems.



Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air – these systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed or disabled.

Gather essential supplies, such as nonperishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting, and plastic garbage bags.

Select a room with few or no windows or vents. The room should be above the ground floor if possible, with space for everyone to be seated. Select several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows work well. Avoid rooms with ventilation blowers or pipes because this equipment may not be able to be sealed adequately.

Hard wired telephone. If possible, have a hard-wired telephone in the room in case you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cell phones may not work during an emergency.



Duct tape and plastic sheeting. Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the doors and any vents into the room. See illustration on following page.

Make a list of everyone in the room, call your business' designated emergency contact and report who is in the room with you and their affiliation with your business.

Listen to the radio or television until you are told all is safe or that you should evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

Shelter in place - for short time only. 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 and you will suffocate.