

Hazardous Materials: Shelter in Place

If hazardous materials are spilled or have been released into the air, officials may order you to shelter in place. Incidents could include a railway accident involving hazardous substances, a chemical plant explosion, or a nuclear blast.

If you get an order to shelter in place, stay inside and take refuge in a small interior room with no or few windows until you are alerted that it is safe to leave.

Orders to shelter in place are usually only in effect for a few hours, not for days or weeks.



For your safety, it is imperative that you stay indoors when ordered to shelter in place, or if you see or smell a cloud, vapour or smoke from a hazardous material outdoors.

► What to Do if You Must Shelter in Place

AT HOME

- ❑ Close and lock all exterior doors, windows and openings, and every interior door.
- ❑ If there is a danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds or curtains.
- ❑ Turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning. If this is not possible, set thermostats so air conditioners, furnaces and hot water heaters will not come on.
- ❑ Close the fireplace damper.
- ❑ Do not use kitchen or bathroom vents or the clothes dryer.
- ❑ Collect your emergency supplies, including duct tape and plastic sheeting or garbage bags, and make sure the radio is working.
- ❑ Gather everyone in an interior room:
 - With no or few windows.
 - With enough space for everyone to sit.
 - That is above ground level (in the case of a chemical threat, an above-ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air and may seep into basements, even if windows are closed).
 - With a hard-wired phone, as cellular networks may be overwhelmed or damaged in an emergency.
- ❑ Bring your pets with you, along with food and water supplies for them.
- ❑ Seal all cracks around doors, windows, vents, etc. with duct tape and heavy plastic.
- ❑ Avoid smoking as it contaminates the air.
- ❑ Call your emergency contact but otherwise do not use the phone unless necessary.
- ❑ Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe, or you are ordered to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas that are at greatest risk.
- ❑ Do not leave the building until told to. If you must evacuate, shut vents and turn off attic fans and other ventilation systems if there is time.
- ❑ Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe, or you are ordered to evacuate.
- ❑ Do not leave until told to. If you evacuate, shut vents and turn off attic fans and other ventilation systems if there is time.

Listen to CKNW AM 980, CBC AM 690 or another local radio or TV station and follow all instructions. Also check www.portcoquitlam.ca, the City's Facebook and Twitter pages, and the Emergency Notification Line: 604.927.5311

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Shelter in Place (cont.)

AT WORK, SCHOOL OR ANOTHER BUILDING

- Close the business, school or building.
- If the site has an emergency plan, activate it and follow reverse evacuation procedures to bring everyone indoors.
- Ask everyone in the building, including visitors, to stay on the premises. When authorities provide direction to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps now, wherever they are, and not drive or walk outdoors.
- Collect any emergency kits or supplies in the building, including duct tape and plastic sheeting or garbage bags. Make sure you have a working radio.
- Select an interior room where everyone will take shelter. This could include a gymnasium with no exterior windows, large storage closet, utility room, meeting room or office. Choose rooms:
 - With enough space for everyone to sit (select several rooms if necessary to avoid overcrowding).
 - With no or as few windows and vents as possible.
 - That are above ground level (in the case of a chemical threat, an above-ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air and may seep into basements, even if windows are closed.)
 - With a hard-wired telephone, as cellular networks may be overwhelmed or damaged in an emergency.
- If there is a building-wide PA system, use it to direct people to stay on the premises and to gather in the designated shelter locations. Otherwise, designate individuals to do this verbally.
- Have people familiar with the building's mechanical systems turn off, seal or disable all fans, heating and air conditioning systems. Pay particular attention to systems that automatically exchange interior and exterior air.
- Turn on call-forwarding or voicemail. If possible, change recordings to indicate that the business, school or building is closed and that everyone is remaining in the building until authorities advise that it is safe to leave.
- Bring everyone into the designated shelter area and shut and lock the door.
- Close any window shades, blinds or curtains.
- Seal all cracks around doors, vents, windows etc. with duct tape and plastic (heavier than food wrap).
- Write down the name of everyone in the room. If the business, school or building has an emergency contact, call the contact to report who is in the room.
- Ask everyone to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
- Keep listening to the radio or television until you are told all is safe, or you are ordered to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas that are at greatest risk.

OUTSIDE OR IN A VEHICLE

- Stay upstream, uphill or upwind of the spill.
- If you are very close to home, your office or a public building, go there immediately. Otherwise, seek shelter in any nearby building or vehicle.
- If you are in a vehicle but can't get to a building quickly and safely, stop in the safest place possible. If it is sunny, try to stop in the shade.
- Turn off the engine and collect any available emergency supplies.
- Close windows, doors and vents tightly. If possible, seal vents with duct tape.
- Listen to the radio and stay put until you are told it is safe to go, you receive further instructions, or it is unsafe to stay there.