



Hazardous Materials Safety

Chemicals that are dangerous to human health can be found almost everywhere and are used on a daily basis. Therefore, a hazardous material incident could occur anywhere at any time and it could occur in a variety of ways.

Before a Hazardous Materials Incident:

- Make a Disaster-Supply Kit.
- Make a Family Emergency Communications Plan.
- Contact your Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to learn more about chemical hazards and to find out what needs to be done to minimize risk. Quarterly LEPC meetings are open to the public.

After a Hazardous Materials Incident:

- Continue to monitor local news outlets via radio or television and listen to important instructions from the local authorities.
- Act quickly if you have come into contact with, or have been exposed to, hazardous materials. Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms as soon as possible.
- Continue to avoid contact with those who may have come into contact with hazardous materials unless told otherwise.
- Go to a designated shelter if you have been told to evacuate. Return home only when authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Report any lingering vapors or other hazards to your local emergency contacts. Visit riema.ri.gov/response/local for contact info.

Avoid contact with those who may have come into contact with hazardous materials.

During a Hazardous Materials Incident:

Listen to the local radio or television stations for information and instructions.

- Follow these instructions carefully.
- Stay away from the area where the hazardous material incident is being reported to minimize risk of contamination.
- Remember that some toxic chemicals are odorless.

If you are outside:

- Stay upstream, uphill, and upwind from the incident area. Try to put as much distance between yourself and the incident and limit yourself to at least a half of a mile from the area.
- Do not walk into or touch any spilled liquids, airborne mists, or condensed solid chemical deposits. Try not to inhale gases, fumes, or smoke. If possible, cover mouth with a cloth or some type of clothing.

If you are in a motor vehicle:

- Pull over and seek shelter in a permanent building.
- If you must remain in your car, close all windows and vents and shut off heat or air conditioning.

If asked to shelter in place:

- Bring pets indoors.
- Close and lock all outside doors, windows and vents, as well as fireplace dampers.
- Turn off air conditioners and other ventilations systems.
- If gas or vapors have entered the building, take shallow breaths through a damp cloth or towel. Avoid eating or drinking any food or water that may have been contaminated.