

SHELTER-IN-PLACE OR EVACUATE

WOULD YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?

A PREPAREDNESS GUIDE FOR THE HOME

*No matter where you live, your community may experience a natural or man-made disaster – a tornado, flood, winter storm, fire or nuclear power plant accident. In any type of disaster, individuals and families should prepare and know what to do when local officials tell them to **SHELTER-IN-PLACE** or **EVACUATE** their homes, business or school.*

*This leaflet is designed to explain what these two important terms mean and what should be done by you before, during and after you are advised to **SHELTER-IN-PLACE** or **EVACUATE** by local officials.*

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SHELTER – IN – PLACE

WHAT TO DO ~ WHAT NOT TO DO

INFORMATION FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AT HOME OR WORK

What is Shelter-In-Place? Shelter-In-Place simply means staying inside your home, business, or other facility, or seeking shelter in the nearest available building.

During an accidental release of toxic chemicals or emergencies involving hazardous materials where air quality may be threatened, Shelter-In-Place keeps you inside a protected area and out of danger.

WHEN SHOULD I USE SHELTER-IN-PLACE?

Local authorities are responsible for issuing orders for Shelter-In-Place during chemical or hazardous material emergencies. You may receive notice directly from police or fire officials, siren notification, telephone notification, or through radio or television broadcasts.

As soon as you are notified that an emergency situation exists in your area, tune your local Emergency Alert System (EAS) station for further information. Primary EAS stations for Will County include: WJOL (1340 AM), WSSR (96.7 FM), WCCQ (98.3 FM), and WRXQ (100.7 FM).

Emergency information and steps to be taken will be broadcast regularly until the emergency is over.

SHELTER-IN-PLACE AT HOME

If you are asked to Shelter-In-Place, take the following actions:

- If possible, bring outdoor pets inside.
- Close and lock all doors and windows to the outside.
- Turn off all heating/air-conditioning systems and switch inlet or vents to the “closed” position.
- Close all fireplace dampers.
- Seal gaps around window-type air-conditioners, fireplace dampers, doors and windows with plastic sheeting, wax paper, aluminum wrap or any other suitable material and tape.
- Seal bathroom exhaust fans or fills, range vents, dryer vents, and any other openings to the best extent possible.
- Close drapes or shades over windows. Stay away from windows.
- Remain in place until you are told by police or fire officials, or through radio /television broadcasts that it is safe to leave.

If time does not permit you to seal the entire home, close as many internal doors as possible, move to the most central room in the home and seal that room as above.

USE THE TELEPHONE ONLY IN EMERGENCIES

SHELTER-IN-PLACE AT WORK

In addition to the directions listed for your home, you should take the following steps:

- Ensure that all ventilation systems are set to 100 percent recirculation so that no outside air is drawn into the building.
- If 100 percent recirculation is not possible, ventilation systems should be turned off.
- Minimize use of elevators as they tend to “pump” air in and out of a building while moving up and down.
- Again, remain in place until you receive notice from police or fire officials, or radio/television broadcasts that it is safe to leave.

NOTE: If Special Facilities such as schools, hospitals and nursing homes have been instructed to Shelter-In-Place, officials will be completing the same safety precautions that you are at home. Do not attempt to go to schools, hospitals or nursing homes to pick-up family members.

WHAT IF I CAN'T FIND SHELTER?

Studies indicate that taking shelter is the best response to a chemical release. Even a poorly sealed building or vehicle provides some protection against a release. If you can't get inside, move so the wind is blowing from your left to right, or right to left, but not directly into your face or from behind you. This would allow you the best opportunity to get away from the highest concentration of the release.

**WHEN ADVISED TO SHELTER-IN-PLACE DURING AN
ACCIDENTIAL RELEASE OF AN EXTREMELY
HAZARDOUS MATERIAL.
REMEMBER!**

DO

- Stay inside your home, place of business, or another enclosed building.
- Tune to the **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** station on your radio or television for further information. The primary **EAS** station for Will County are:
 - WJOL – 1340 AM**
 - WSSR – 96.7 FM**
 - WCCQ – 98.3 FM**
 - WRXQ – 100.7 FM**

DON'T

- Don't go outside or attempt to drive unless you are specifically instructed to evacuate. (Evacuation procedures may vary by community.)
- Don't call 9-1-1 to check on the status of the emergency. Listen to your radio for further information and updates.

EVACUATION

Disasters force people to evacuate their homes more often than you may realize. Transportation or industrial accidents release harmful substances, forcing thousands of people to leave their homes for a safer area. Fires and floods result in evacuation even more frequently, as well as other natural disasters.

Therefore, evacuation planning is important. Specific evacuation plans may vary by community and by the type of disaster.

HOW MUCH TIME WILL I HAVE TO EVACUATE?

The amount of time you will have to evacuate your home or community depends on the type of disaster. In disasters resulting from a hazardous material spill, you may have only moments to leave. *This means you must prepare now.* for you may have no time to collect even the most basic necessities.

EVACUATION PERIODS

Evacuation periods can last for hours or several days. For part or all of this time, you may be responsible for your own food, clothing and other supplies until help arrives or utilities are repaired.

ADVANCED PLANNING FOR EVACUATION

1. See 72-Hour Emergency Preparedness Kit on page 8 of this booklet.
2. Review evacuation procedures with your family so that everyone understands what to do and where to meet if you are separated.
 - Ask a friend or relative outside of your area (out-of-state is best) to be the “checkpoint”, so family members can call that person to say they are safe.
 - School officials will evacuate your child(ren) if they are to be evacuated. They will be sent to the same reception center as you are. If you have specific questions, contact your school superintendent or principal. **Do not go to the school and pick your child up.**
3. Plan now where you will go if you must evacuate.
 - Consider the homes of relatives or friends who live nearby but outside the potential disaster area.
 - A reception center or shelter location will be announced by local authorities when you are told to evacuate.
4. Keep fuel in your car at all times. During emergencies, filling stations may be closed. Never store extra fuel in the garage.
5. If you do not have a car or another vehicle, make arrangements with friends, neighbors or local emergency management officials.

6. Know where and how to shut off your home's electricity, gas and water at the main switch and valves. Make sure you have the necessary tools to do this (usually pipe and crescent or adjustable wrenches). Check with local utilities for instructions.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU ARE TOLD TO EVACUATE

1. If there is time, secure your house.
 - Unplug appliances.
 - Turn off natural gas, propane or other fuel valves where they enter the house. In a flood hazard area, propane tanks should be secured to a structure.
 - Turn off the main water valve.
 - Take any actions needed to prevent damage to water pipes by freezing weather, if this is a threat.
 - Securely close and lock all doors, windows and garage.
 - Place a sign on the front door or window to notify authorities that your house or apartment has been evacuated and no one remains inside. If possible, leave a number where you can be reached.
2. Follow recommended evacuation routes. Do not take shortcuts. They may be blocked.
3. Listen to the Emergency Alert System (EAS) for instructions and emergency shelter information. In Will County they are: WJOL (1340 AM), WSSR (96.7 FM), WCCQ (98.3 FM), WRXQ (100.7 FM)
4. Carry a family safety kit (See 72-Hour Emergency Preparedness Kit on page 8 of this booklet).

RETURNING HOME

1. Do not return to the emergency site until local authorities say the area is safe.
2. Continue listening to the radio or television for information and instructions.
3. Use extreme caution when entering or working in the buildings – structures may be damaged or weakened. Beware of poisonous snakes in flooded structures and debris.
4. Do not take lanterns, torches or any kind of flame into a damaged building. Leaking gas or other flammable materials may be present. Use battery-operated do not use any kind of light. However, if you suspect a gas leak, do not use any kind of light. The light itself could cause an explosion.
5. If you smell gas, turn off the main gas valve at the meter.
 - Do not turn on lights – they can produce sparks that will ignite the gas.
 - Leave the house immediately and notify the gas company or fire department.
 - Do not re-enter the house until an authorized person tells you it is safe to do so.
6. Notify the power company or fire department if you see fallen or damaged electrical wires.

7. If any appliances are wet, turn off the main electrical power switch in your home before you unplug them. Dry out appliances, wall switches and sockets before you plug appliances in again. Call utility companies for guidance.
8. Check food and water supplies for contamination and spoilage. Follow specific instructions from the Will County Health Department or agriculture extension agency.
9. Wear sturdy shoes when walking through debris or broken glass, and use heavy gloves when removing debris.
10. If the evacuation occurred due to a hazardous material spill, check with local officials before returning to the area for special precautions or directions that should be followed.
 - Upon returning home, open windows and turn on fans to provide ventilation
 - A person or items that has been exposed to a hazardous chemical may be contaminated and could contaminate other people or items. If you have come in contact with or have been exposed to hazardous chemicals, you should:
 - a. Follow decontamination instructions from your local authorities. (Depending on the chemical, you may be advised to take a thorough shower, or you may be advised to stay away from water and follow another procedure.)
 - b. Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms that may be related to the hazardous material release.
 - c. If medical help is not immediately available and you believe you may be contaminated, remove all of your clothing and shower thoroughly (unless local authorities say the chemical is water reactive and advise you to do otherwise.) Change into fresh, loose, warm clothing and seek medical help as soon as possible.
 - d. Place exposed clothing and shoes in tightly sealed containers without allowing them to come in contact with other materials, and call local authorities to find out about proper disposal.
 - e. Advise everyone who comes in contact with you that you may have been exposed to a toxic substance.
 - f. Find out from local authorities how to clean up your land and property.
 - g. Report any lingering vapors or other hazards to your local authorities.

72-HOUR EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT

A 72-Hour Emergency Preparedness Kit can be valuable for your home as well as your place of work. The following items are recommended:

flashlight
battery-powered radio
drinking water
non-perishable, ready-to-eat foods
can opener
hygiene products
fire extinguisher
first aid kit
adjustable wrench
change of clothing
sleeping bags
money / credit cards
prescription medication
special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members
food for family pets

These items can be stored in a plastic box and be kept easily at hand in a closet.

WILL COUNTY EMERGENCY INDOOR TELEPHONE NOTIFICATION SYSTEM

No one wants to think about emergencies such as natural disasters or industrial accidents in our community. But emergencies happen, and being prepared is always the best approach.

That's why the Will County Emergency Management Agency, Will County Emergency Telephone System Board, along with several industries in Will County have teamed up to provide an enhanced emergency alert system for your neighborhood. The Emergency Indoor Telephone Notification System is a state-of-the-art telecommunications service designed to inform you and your neighbors of critical situations at a moment's notice.

The Emergency Telephone Notification System is a supplemental warning system, backing up effective methods already in place such as sirens and Emergency Alert System (EAS).

In the unlikely event of an emergency affecting your neighborhood, you may first hear sirens. In some cases, you won't hear a siren, but in either event you may receive a computerized telephone call from the Will County Emergency Telephone Notification System. A message will be given to you over the phone about the emergency and what actions you should take (either Shelter-In-Place or Evacuate).

For more information on the Will County Emergency Telephone Notification System, view the title on our website at www.willcountyema.org or call our office at 815-740-8351.

OUTDOOR WARNING SIRENS

Probably the most common and widely recognized method of warning is through the use of outdoor warning sirens. They are used by communities for a variety of purposes:

- ❖ **TESTING** (1st Tuesday of each month at 10:00 am)
- ❖ **ALERTING** (members of a volunteer fire department of a fire)
- ❖ **SEVERE WEATHER**
- ❖ **MAJOR HAZARDOUS MATERIAL** or **CHEMICAL SPILL** (in the community)

During emergencies residents will hear a 3 to 5 minute steady signal of the sirens, horns or other devices. When you hear the siren and are unsure what they are sounding for, go indoors and **turn your radio to one of the Emergency Alert System (EAS) Stations**, and listen for essential emergency information.

DO NOT call local fire or police agencies to ask why the sirens are sounding. If it is an emergency, they are busy getting equipment and manpower to the emergency scene.

Remember, outdoor warning sirens are just that, out door warning. The sirens are meant to be heard outside to signal you to go indoors and tune your radio or television station to the local Emergency Alert System (EAS) Station. As homes continue to become more energy efficient and sound proofing enhanced, outdoor warning sirens that once could be heard decades ago inside of a home can no longer be heard. That's why other means of warning are in place.

In Will County an ALL CLEAR signal is **not** sent. That's why it's important to monitor your local radio station during times of emergency for further information. Too much confusion trying to differentiate between the signals can result from issuing an "All Clear". No activation of sirens occur for weather watches or "All Clear".

During times of severe weather the National Weather Service issues a Severe Thunderstorm Watch or Tornado Watch for a six hour period. The Weather Service may terminate a watch early if weather conditions change or the threat of severe weather no longer exists. Severe Thunderstorm Warnings and Tornado Warnings are normally issued for a period of one hour. Warnings are usually allowed to expire on their own, without an early termination for the Weather Service.

In Will County tune you radio station to:

WJOL – 1340 AM
WSSR – 96.7 FM
WCCQ – 98.3 FM
WRXQ – 100.7 FM

for information, when you hear sirens sound in your community.

We recommend that you keep this information at hand and refer to it during times of emergency.

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Out-of-State Contact

NAME: _____

CITY: _____

TELEPHONE (DAY): _____ (EVENING): _____

Local Contact

NAME: _____

TELEPHONE (DAY): _____ (EVENING): _____

Nearest Relative

NAME: _____

CITY: _____

TELEPHONE (DAY): _____ (EVENING): _____

Family Work Numbers

FATHER: _____ MOTHER: _____

OTHER: _____

Emergency Telephone Numbers

In a life threatening emergency, dial 9-1-1 for the local ambulance, fire, and police.

HOSPITAL: _____

Family Physicians

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

Reunion Locations

1.) RIGHT OUTSIDE OF YOUR HOME: _____

2.) AWAY FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD, IN CASE YOU CAN NOT RETURN HOME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER: _____