Sheltering in place

One of the instructions you may be given when hazardous materials may have been released into the atmosphere is to “shelter-in-place”. This precaution aims to keep you safe by keeping you indoors. (This is not the same thing as going to a public shelter at a school or other location.)

Shelter-in-place means selecting a small interior room with no or few windows and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire home or office building. You might need to shelter-in-place if chemical, biological or radiological contaminants are released into the environment. If this happens, local authorities will provide information on TV and radio stations to help you protect yourself and your family. Keep a radio or TV on at work and at home so you can be alerted to hazardous conditions quickly.

Know how to shelter-in-place

Close and lock all windows and exterior doors.

- If you’re told there is danger of explosion, close window shades, blinds and curtains.
- Turn off all fans, as well as heating and air conditioning systems.
- Close the fireplace damper.
- Get your emergency preparedness kit and radio.
- Go to an interior room without windows that’s above ground level. Bring your pets with you.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the door and any vents into the room.
- Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe.

Close curtains and lock your windows and doors if authorities advise you to shelter-in-place.

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