

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS (HAZMAT)

WHAT IT IS

Some industrial or transportation accidents (including fires, explosions, and spills) have the capacity to release dangerous levels of hazardous substances, such as industrial chemicals, volatile fuels, toxic waste, compressed gas, or other poisons or explosives. In some cases, the material released may not be visible or have an identifiable odor.

Hazardous materials releases sometimes require extended clean-up efforts and may result in residents being unable to be in their homes for long periods of time.

WHAT TO DO

Before (Preparedness/ Mitigation)

- Sign up for Fairfax Alerts and have a battery or crank powered radio available.
- Identify a shelter-in-place area within your home and know your evacuation plan.
- Contact your Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) to know what hazardous materials are being moved, used, or stored in your area.
- Know the number to Poison Control.
- Learn First Aid.
- Refer to “Medical Emergency,” below.

KEY TERMS

- ▶ A **Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC)** is a group charged with identifying industrial hazardous materials and keeping the community informed of the potential risk. For more information about hazardous materials in your area, you can ask your LEPC about storage and usage. For more information, visit lepcfairfax.org/.
- ▶ A **Fixed Facility** is any industrial complex, warehouse, manufacturing site, or even an office building that contains or handles hazardous materials.
- ▶ **Shelter-in-place** means selecting a small, interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there.

During (Response)

- Listen to official information: if you are told to evacuate, do so.
- If you are told to stay inside:
 - Take family members and pets to your predetermined shelter-in-place location.
 - Close all windows and vents, seal windows and doors with tape or wet towels, and turn off all fans and air-exchange heating or cooling systems.
- If you are outside at the time of the incident, try to stay upstream, uphill and upwind.
- If you are in a vehicle, stop and find shelter in a permanent building.
- Stay away from the incident site.

After (Recovery)

- Leave your shelter-in-place location or return home when officials say it is safe.
- Check in with family and friends by texting or using social media.