

WEATHER & DISASTERS

Radiation & nuclear emergency actions

A building provides protection while officials assess the release and give location-specific instructions.

Get inside. Stay inside. Stay tuned to official emergency instructions.

Get inside promptly

- Enter the nearest suitable building. A basement or the middle of a substantial building offers better separation from material outside.
- Bring pets inside when you can do so promptly. A vehicle does not provide the protection of a building.
- If relatives are in school, hospital or care facilities, follow the facility's protective plan rather than crossing an affected area to collect them.

Reduce material brought indoors

- If you were outside, carefully remove outer clothing and put it in a bag away from people and pets.
- Shower or gently wash exposed skin as instructed. Avoid scratching or scrubbing skin; change into clean clothing.
- Close windows and doors. Follow instructions about ventilation drawing in outside air. Keep away from exterior walls and the roof when possible.

Use reliable instructions

- Listen to emergency alerts, radio and local officials. Sheltering may be safer than immediately trying to drive away.
- Use stored water and sealed food while awaiting specific advice. Check instructions before using outside food, water or supplies.
- Do not take potassium iodide or other treatment on your own. It is not a general radiation antidote; use only when health authorities instruct.

Prepare for the next instruction

- Keep a radio, medicines, contacts and supplies together in your shelter location. Help household members hear or understand updates.
- Leave when officials direct, or if a life-threatening emergency makes the building unsafe. Follow announced routes and screening instructions.
- Record official instructions and their update time. Do not substitute rumors, fixed evacuation distances or improvised cleanup methods.

Sources & further guidance

[CDC - radiation emergency response](https://www.cdc.gov/radiation/emergency-response/) | www.cdc.gov

[CDC - radiation emergency preparation](https://www.cdc.gov/radiation/emergency-preparation/) | www.cdc.gov

[CDC - radiation emergency questions](https://www.cdc.gov/radiation/emergency-questions/) | www.cdc.gov