

# Sheltering In-Place PREPAREDNESS



Evacuation is not always the safest option in the event of a hazardous material or other type of emergency. Your home or workplace can be a safe haven from an emergency. Up-front preparations will help.

- "Sheltering In-Place" or "Protecting In-Place" means staying inside your home or other building until emergency officials give an "all-clear" signal. Sheltering In-place can be your safest option in some emergencies.
- Sheltering In-Place is most commonly used for hazardous material emergencies but can also be used during some storms and some police emergencies where evacuation and exposure to the outside can be life-threatening.
- Sheltering In-Place preparations complement your other family emergency preparedness efforts.

## Sheltering In-Place supplies

- Battery-powered radio, flashlight, extra batteries, battery powered or cellular phone (if no phone in room)
- Snack foods, water or drinks, pet foods
- Plastic sheeting for windows, doors, air vents or other opening. You may want to pre-cut and label them
- Rolls of duct tape for the plastic sheeting
- Towel for under the door
- First Aid Kit

## Prepare your home before . . .

- Choose a room for a "safe-room": Ideally, the room has few windows, large enough to hold the number of people you wish and has access to water. A bedroom with an adjoining bath is a great place.
- Prepare window coverings: Windows should be sealed to prevent hazards from entering. Measure windows and skylights - cut plastic (adding 6" to the borders) to be placed over the windows. Label the sheets for each window. For a serious wind condition think about something heavier to guard against broken glass entering the room (wood, heavy cardboard, even a mattress).
- Prepare vent and door coverings: Like the windows, measure each air vent, door and any other opening leading outside the room. Cut, label and store plastic sheeting.
- Assemble shelter in-place supplies: Your supplies should be stored in the pre-designated room. An under-the-bed box may work well or use a container that fits on a closet shelf or in a cabinet.

## Potential Sheltering In-Place Emergencies

- Hazardous material release (or fire)
- Severe wind storm (or thunderstorm)
- Terrorist incident

**ALWAYS follow the directions of appropriate emergency officials**

## Sheltering In-Place Procedures . . .

- Stay inside the enclosed building or your "safe room". If possible bring pets inside.
- Close and lock all windows and doors to the outside. Close drapes or shades over all windows. Push wet towels under the doors to help seal against outside air if appropriate.
- Turn off all heating/air conditioning systems, and switch inlets or vents to the "closed" position. Extinguish fireplace fires and close dampers.
- In the shelter room - use tape and pre-cut/labeled plastic sheeting to seal around doors, windows, heating vents, skylights, or any opening which could let air in.
- Seal bathroom exhaust fans or grills, range vents, dryer vents, and other openings (in shelter room only).
- If there is no phone in your designated shelter room, bring along a battery-operated or cellular phone.
- Listen to the Emergency Alert System radio messages and follow the instructions. Other local stations may carry the instructions.
- Do not go outside or attempt to drive unless specifically told to do so. Evacuation procedures may vary by area of danger.
- Once the emergency has passed, ventilate your entire house.

## Sheltering In-Place DON'TS . . .

- Don't: call the school to try to pick up your children. They will be safer sheltering in-place at the school than they would be riding in your vehicle. (Also: The school may be outside hazard area - depending upon the emergency)
- Don't: Leave your shelter until the "all clear" signal is sounded.
- Don't: Risk your safety for pets. If they can't be found within a minute or two, you'll have to shelter in-place without them.
- Don't: Call 9-1-1 for a Non-Emergency.
- Don't: Wait until the disaster strikes to prepare . . . **It's never too early!**

### Potential emergency public information sources:

- Emergency service door-to-door or vehicle public address system notification or other outdoor warning device.
- Telephone alerting networks
- Radio & television news
- Emergency Alert System (EAS) EAS

stations in Bergen County:

WNSH94.7 FM	WWDJ 970 AM
WFDU 89.1 FM	WABC 770 AM
WRPR 90.3 FM	WPAT 103.1 FM
WCBS 880 AM	(Spanish)

Bergen County Office of Emergency Management  
201-785-5757 or [www.bcoem.org](http://www.bcoem.org)



