

# HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

**Hazardous Materials** are substances that, because of their chemical nature, pose a potential risk to life, health or property if they are released. Incidents involving hazardous materials can occur during production, storage, transportation, use, or disposal of these materials.

Transportation accidents (overturned tanker truck, train derailment, plane crash, vessel collision), infrastructure failure (ruptured pipeline) or process plant mishap (storage tank leak) are instances that can result in the release of hazardous materials. Sometimes the incident can be the result of malfunctioning equipment or improper storage or mixing of chemicals. The distance from the released product and the types of materials involved will in large part dictate the need to evacuate or whether sheltering in place is sufficient. Responding promptly to reduce personal exposure to hazardous materials is the primary objective in these incidents. This can be accomplished by avoiding the contaminated area / object.

## Before a Hazardous Materials Incident:

- Find out what facilities in the area surrounding your home, school or work produce, store or handle hazardous materials. Determine what chemicals you could possibly be exposed to. Check with the Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for details.

**Jefferson Parish  
Local Emergency Planning Committee  
1221 Elmwood Park Blvd., Suite 704  
Jefferson, LA 70123  
Phone: (504) 736-6211  
Fax: (504) 736-6247**

- Prepare a Family Disaster Supply Kit for your home, office and vehicle.
- Familiarize yourself with the Interstate and highway systems surrounding your place of residence, work and school. Practice alternate routes to leave your community in the event you must evacuate.
- Have a family evacuation plan. Discuss with family members where you will meet in the event you must evacuate. Have alternate meet-up locations selected.
- At work, school, and at frequently visited places (i.e., mall, church, business), familiarize yourself with floor plans and the location of emergency exits, fire alarms and extinguishers.
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**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

**City of Kenner   Office of Emergency Management   (504) 471-2100  
OEM@KENNER.LA.US**

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## If You Suspect a Hazardous Materials Incident:

- Report these incidents to 9-1-1 and leave the contaminated area immediately:
  - Overturned tanker truck with placards containing hazardous materials logos
  - Fire / explosion
  - Leaking / escaping gas product (hissing sound)
  - Chemical mist
  - Spilled flammable (gasoline, diesel)
  - Liquid chemical spill
  - Exposed known hazardous solid
  - Discarded or damaged hazardous materials/waste containers
  - If you or a family member experience skin, eye or throat irritation or are overcome due to possible exposure to a chemical or hazardous material.
- Avoid driving or walking through the mist or contaminated area.

## If You Are Informed of a Hazardous Materials Incident:

- If you are informed of a hazardous materials release at work, school or in a public area, remain calm and leave the contaminated area immediately.
- Tune to local radio or television stations (see list of Emergency Alert System stations) for further information.
- Follow instructions of authorities carefully.
- Stay away from the incident site to minimize your risk of contamination.
- If you are outside during an incident, remember that gases and mists are heavier than air.
  - Try to stay Uphill, Upwind, and Upstream from the hazardous material release site.
  - Try to go at least one-half mile, or about 10 city blocks away from the danger zone.

## If you are in a Vehicle:

- If you are in a vehicle, stop and seek shelter in a building if possible.
- If you must remain in your car, keep car windows and vents closed and shut off the air conditioner or heater.

## If Informed That You Should Evacuate Your Home:

- If told are you should evacuate your home, do so immediately. Remain calm.
- Use your Family Disaster Kit.
- Check weather conditions (wind direction) and plan your evacuation route. Avoid driving through contaminated areas.
- If authorities indicate you have time, close all windows, shut vents and turn off heating and air conditions, including attic fans, to minimize contamination.

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## If Instructed to “Shelter-in-Place”:

- If you are told to *shelter-in-place*:
  - Carefully follow all instructions given by authorities.
  - Get household members and pets inside as quickly as possible.
  - Close and lock all exterior doors and windows.
  - Close vents, fireplace dampers and as many interior doors as possible.
  - Turn off air conditioners and ventilation systems. In large buildings, set ventilation systems to 100 percent re-circulation so that no outside air is drawn into the building. If this isn't possible, shut down the ventilation system.
  - Go to pre-selected shelter room (room with fewest opening to the outside).
  - Take supplies with you, including:
    - Radio,
    - Food / Water
    - Flashlight
    - Materials to cover and stuff into the cracks and seal around doors and windows (e.g., towels, blankets, duct tape)
  - If warned of the possibility of an explosion, close all curtain and shades in the room and stay away from windows. Take cover behind or under sturdy furniture. Cover your body with blankets or mattress to shield from the explosion.

## At School:

Schools will institute pre-arranged emergency procedures that are designed to protect students. If there is a hazardous materials incident while your child is at school, parents will probably not be permitted to drive to the school to pick up your children. **If necessary, school officials will see to it that your child is transported to a designated reception center/shelter facility away from the contaminated area. It is important for parents to remain calm and cooperate fully with school officials.** Follow the directions of emergency officials and wait until you are asked to pick up your child.

## During a Hazardous Materials Incident:

- Stay tuned to radio and television for alerts and instructions.
- Avoid contact with spilled liquids, airborne mists or condensed solid chemical deposits.
- Keep your body fully covered to provide some protection (e.g., long-sleeves, long pants, gloves, socks, shoes, hat, and handkerchief).
- Do not eat food or drink water that may be contaminated.

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- If indoors, fill the bathtub (sterilize it first with a diluted bleach solution – one part bleach to 10 parts water).
- Fill large containers with water for drinking, cooking and dishwashing.
- Be prepared to turn off the main water intake valve in case authorities advise you to do so.

## After a Hazardous Materials Incident:

- Do not return home or leave your shelter room until local authorities say it is safe.
- Upon returning home, open windows, vents, and turn on fans to provide ventilation.
- Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities.
- **Seek medical treatment as soon as possible for unusual symptoms.**
- If medical help is not immediately available and you think you are contaminated:
  - Remove all your clothing and place it in tightly sealed containers.
  - Shower thoroughly, washing your hands first. **It is very important to pay attention to instructions from authorities; some chemicals are water reactive**
  - Change into loose, clean clothing and seek medical help as soon as possible.
- Contact local authorities about proper disposal of contaminated items.
- Advise everyone who comes into contact with you that you may have been exposed to a toxic substance.
- Check with local authorities on how to clean up your land and property.
- Report any lingering vapors or hazards to local authorities

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