



## FACT SHEET

### Nuclear Event Response

If a significant quantity of radiation is released, a national emergency-response plan that includes federal, state, and local agencies will be activated. For many years CDC has participated in emergency-response drills and has worked closely with other federal, state, and local agencies to develop, test, and implement extensive national radiological emergency-response plans. CDC has the experience and training necessary to respond to a wide variety of terrorist nuclear attacks.

In a radiological emergency, some basic protective measures include the following:

- Seek shelter in a stable building and listen to local radio or television stations for national or local emergency-alert information.
- Follow the protective-action recommendations from state or local health departments. Reduce your potential exposure and adverse health consequences by getting away from the radiation source, increasing your distance from the source, or keeping behind a physical barrier such as the wall of a building.
- If an event involves a nuclear power plant, a national emergency response that has been planned and rehearsed by local, state, and federal agencies for more than 20 years will be initiated. If you live near a nuclear power plant and have not received information that describes the emergency plan for that facility, contact the plant and ask for a copy of that information. You and your family should study the plan and be prepared to follow instructions from local and state public health officials.

Local authorities will issue public health and safety statements advising precautions to take to avoid potential exposure to radiation. Until the amount of contamination is determined, the following precautionary measures are recommended to minimize risk:

- Remain inside and avoid opening doors and windows.
- Keep children indoors.
- Turn off fans, air conditioners, and forced air heating units that bring in fresh air from the outside. Use them only to recirculate air already in the building.
- Go to the nearest building if you are outside. If you must go outside for critical or lifesaving activities, cover your nose and mouth and avoid stirring up and breathing any dust. Remember that your going outside could increase your exposure and possibly spread contamination to others.
- Be aware that trained monitoring teams will be moving through the area wearing special protective clothing and equipment to determine the extent of possible contamination. These teams will wear protective gear as a precaution and not as an indication of the risks to those indoors.
- Avoid eating fruits and vegetables grown in the area until their safety is determined.

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### Other Sources of Information About Radiation

- **The Environmental Protection Agency** [<http://www.epa.gov/>] counterterrorism programs
- **The Nuclear Regulatory Commission Office of Public Affairs** can be contacted at (301) 415-8200.
- **The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)** [<http://www.fema.gov/>] can be reached at (202) 646-4600.
- **The Radiation Emergency Assistance Center/Training Site (REAC/TS)** [<http://www.ornl.gov/reacts/>] can be reached at (865) 576-3131 (ask for REAC/TS).
- **The U.S. National Response Team** [<http://www.nrt.org/production/nrt/home.nsf>]
- **The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE)** [<http://www.energy.gov/engine/content.do>] can be reached at 1-800-dial-DOE.
- The state radiation control director can be found by contacting **The Conference of Radiation Control Program Directors** [<http://www.crcpd.org/>] at (502) 227-4543.

For information on other radiation emergency topics, visit [www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation](http://www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation), or call the CDC public response hotline at (888) 246-2675 (English), (888) 246-2857 (Español), or (866) 874-2646 (TTY)