

Hazardous Chemical Spill / Release Information

As Taylor County prepares for an upcoming hazardous chemical table-top exercise with our community partners, I wanted to ensure that our businesses are better prepared and know what to do during a chemical spill or release that could occur.

Plan to Evacuate or Shelter-in-Place

During a chemical spill or release or hazmat incident, you may be told to evacuate your home or shelter-in-place. Notification to evacuate or shelter-in-place may come via CodeRED (Taylor County Emergency Notification Platform), all hazard weather radio, TV or door-to-door by law enforcement or a fire department members. If you are told to evacuate, remain calm and follow all instructions.

Taylor County Emergency Management, the American Red Cross, Taylor County Human Services and other organizations and volunteers may establish and operate a community-based shelter for local residents at an area public school, recreation center or another appropriate facility. Persons needing shelter may be asked to bring blankets, pillows, a change of clothing, bathing and sanitary supplies, pre-filled prescriptions and other medical needs such as eye care products, dentures and any special dietary supplies you may need.

If you are advised to Shelter-in-Place, follow these easy Shelter-in-Place instructions so you know what to do and how you can better prepare.

- Close the business.
- If there are customers, clients or visitors in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave. When authorities provide directions to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps immediately. Do not drive or walk outdoors.
- Unless there is an immediate threat, ask employees, customers, clients and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
- Turn on call-forwarding or alternative telephone answering systems or services. If the business has voice mail or an automated attendant, change the recording to indicate that the business is closed and that staff and visitors are remaining in the building until authorities advise it is safe to leave.
- Quickly lock exterior doors and close windows, air vents and fire place dampers. Have employees familiar with your buildings mechanical systems

turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems, and clothes dryers. Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air. These systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed or disabled.

- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds or curtains.
- Gather essential disaster supplies, such as nonperishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first-aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting, and plastic garbage bags. (It is best to have these items in your business emergency kit so they are easily accessible).
- Select interior room(s), pantries, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows will work best. Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes, because this equipment may not be able to be sealed from the outdoors.
- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room you have designated.
- Seal all windows, doors and vents with plastic sheeting and duct tape or anything else you have on hand.
- Consider precutting plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal windows, doors, and air vents. Each piece should be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that it lies flat against the wall. Label each piece with the location of where it fits.
- Write down the names of everyone in the room and call your business' designated emergency contact to report who is in the room with you, and their affiliation with your business (employee, visitor, client, customer).
- Listen to the radio, watch a local television channel or use the internet for further instructions until you are told all is safe or to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

If you, or your business has not yet signed up for the CodeRED emergency notification system, please visit www.co.taylor.wi.us – Visitor Resource Center – Quick Links – CodeRED signup. Please also follow the Taylor County Emergency Management Facebook page.

Colleen A. Handrick
Taylor County Emergency Management Director
715-748-3503
colleen.handrick@co.taylor.wi.us