

Shelter-in-Place

One of the basic instructions you may be given in the event of an emergency/disaster is to shelter-in-place. This is a precaution aimed to keep you and your family safe while remaining in your home. If you are told to shelter-in-place, go inside, close all windows and vents and turn off all fans, heating or cooling systems. Take your family members and pets to a safe room, seal windows and doors, and listen to local radio/television stations, or a NOAA Weather Radio for instructions.

- When gathering your family, you can provide a minimal amount of breathing protection by covering your mouth and nose with a damp cloth.
- Immediately after the shelter-in-place announcement is issued, fill up bathtubs or larger containers for an additional water supply, and turn off the intake valve to the house. Water supplies may become contaminated. Preserve the water you have available.
- If you think gas or vapors could have entered the building, take shallow breaths through a cloth or a towel, move to an unexposed area within the building. Many chemicals can cause damage to breathing passages.
- Avoid eating any food or drinking any water if you're not sure if it's contaminated. Injury may occur from eating or drinking toxic chemicals.
- Seal house so contaminants can not enter. Below are some helpful hints:
 - Close and lock all windows and doors in your home.
 - Turn off all ventilation systems which include fans, heating and air conditioning systems.
 - Close the fireplace damper.
 - Seal gaps or cracks under doorways and windows with wet towels covered by duct tape.
 - If time permits seal all openings that allow air to enter the structure from the outside, with duct tape and plastic sheeting, wax paper, or aluminum foil.
 - Close off nonessential rooms such as storage areas, laundry rooms, and extra bedrooms.
- Go to an above ground room with the least amount of windows and doors. Some chemicals are heavier than air and may seep into basements, even if the windows are closed. **(DO NOT GO INTO A BASEMENT.)**
- Take your disaster supply kit with you. These items may make you more comfortable while you are waiting for further instructions.
- Stay in the room and listen to your radio or television until you are told all is safe, or you are told to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community. Following the advice of local authorities is your safest choice.
- If you are told there is danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains. To avoid injury, stay away from the windows. If windows break due to the explosion, the shades will help reduce shattering glass from entering your home.



Memphis/Shelby County Emergency Management Agency
P.O. Box 111249, Memphis, TN 38111
Phone#: 515-2525 Fax #: 458-4016
Claude Talford - Director

