



SHELTER IN PLACE

AT YOUR SCHOOL

What is it?

Shelter In Place is a safety procedure designed to help protect the staff and students at your school during a serious airborne hazardous material emergency. It means taking shelter inside the school until the danger has passed.

The goal of Shelter In Place is to prevent contaminated outside air from entering the school for the duration of the incident. Incidents usually last a few hours, not days or weeks. There is little danger anyone will run out of oxygen during this procedure.

It is important to keep students in school during a hazardous material emergency. Educate parents about Shelter In Place so they understand why students should not leave. Determine how you will handle phone calls from concerned parents and student cell phone use during the emergency. It is important to limit non-emergency phone use.

You will be notified of a serious hazardous material emergency by one or more of the following methods:

- Television or radio
- NOAA weather radio*
- Outdoor warning sirens
- Door-to-door notification
- Public address systems on vehicles.

*If your weather radio is programmable, set it to receive civil emergency messages. Make sure it is on at all times.

What do I do?

If you are told to Shelter In Place by local authorities, please take the following safety actions:

- Close the school. Activate the school's emergency plan. Bring students and staff inside. If there are visitors in the building, ask them to Shelter In Place with you.
- Close and lock all windows and exterior doors. Put a sign on your front entrance that says "We are Sheltering In Place."
- Turn off all air conditioners, fans and heating systems, etc. that draw in outside air. Have designated maintenance personnel turn off air handling systems.
- If your school has a fireplace, close the damper.
- Get the school Disaster Supply Kit and make sure the radio is working.
- Go to an interior room or the space designated by your local department.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting to seal windows, doors, vents, outlets, etc.
- Stay inside this room and listen to your radio or television until local authorities tell you the emergency is over OR you are told to evacuate.
- When local authorities announce the end of the emergency, ventilate the school by opening doors and windows. Go outside until the building is aired out.

What do I need?

Your school is encouraged to prepare a Disaster Supply Kit with emergency supplies. The kit should be stored in the room in which staff and students plan to Shelter In Place.

At a minimum, the kit should contain the following items:

- **Battery-operated radio and extra batteries**
- **NOAA weather radio**
- **Water and ready-to-eat snacks**
- **First aid kit**
- **Flashlights and extra batteries**
- **Thick plastic sheeting (i.e., plastic drop cloths, window sealing plastic)**
- **Duct tape (i.e., high-quality duct tape or polypropylene tape)**
- **Scissors**
- **Towels**
- **Hygiene items (i.e., plastic bucket with tight lid, garbage bags)**
- **Specialty items (i.e., medication, books).**



For more information, please contact the Cincinnati Fire Department at (513) 357-7585 or the Alliance for Chemical Safety at (513) 612-3074.