



NUCLEAR POWER PLANT EMERGENCIES

Nuclear power plants are designed to rigorous standards, have many redundant safety features and are carefully regulated and monitored; however, problems and accidents can happen. If a nuclear power plant emergency did occur, it could result in dangerously high levels of radiation in your area, especially within 10 miles of the plant (~3 million Americans live within 10 miles of an operating nuclear power plant). Exposure to high levels of radiation is extremely dangerous to you and your family. Radiation can also contaminate the water and soil within a 50-mile radius.



How to Prepare

- **Build an Emergency Supply Kit**, which includes items such as non-perishable food, water, a battery-powered or hand-crank radio, extra flashlights and batteries. Add plastic sheeting, duct tape and scissors to be better prepared for a nuclear power plant incident. Prepare a portable kit and keep it in your car in case you are told to evacuate. This kit should include:
 - Copies of prescription medications and medical supplies.
 - Bedding and clothing, including sleeping bags and pillows.
 - Copies of important documents: driver's license, Social Security card, proof of residence, insurance policies, wills, deeds, birth and marriage certificates, tax records, etc.
 - See Ready Army website (www.ready.army.mil) for more information on how to build a kit.
- **Make a Family Emergency Plan**. Your family may not be together when disaster strikes, so it is important to know how you will contact one another, how you will get back together and what you will do in case of an emergency.
 - Plan places where your family will meet, both within and outside of your immediate neighborhood.
 - It may be easier to make a long-distance phone call than to call across town, so an out-of-town contact may be in a better position to communicate among separated family members.
 - You may also want to inquire about emergency plans at places where your family spends time: work, daycare and school. If no plans exist, consider volunteering to help create one.
 - Knowing your community's warning systems and disaster plans, including evacuation routes.
 - Notify caregivers and babysitters about your plan.
 - Make plans for your pets
- Obtain public emergency information materials from the power company that operates your local nuclear power plant or from the local emergency services office. If within 10 miles of the power plant, you should receive materials yearly from the power company, or state or local government.
- Familiarize yourself with these terms to help identify a nuclear power plant emergency:
 - **Notification of Unusual Event**—A small problem has occurred at the plant. No radiation leak is expected. No action on your part will be necessary.
 - **Alert**—A small problem has occurred, and small amounts of radiation could leak inside the plant. This will not affect you and no action is required.
 - **Site Area Emergency**—Area sirens may be sounded. Listen to your radio or television for safety information.
 - **General Emergency**—Radiation could leak outside the plant and off the plant site. The sirens will sound. Tune to your local radio or television station for reports. Be prepared to follow instructions promptly.



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What to Do If There is a Nuclear Power Plant Emergency

- If a nuclear power plant accidentally releases radiation in your area, local authorities will activate warning sirens or another approved alert method. They will also instruct you through the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on local television and radio stations on how to protect yourself.
 - Follow the EAS instructions carefully.
 - Minimize your exposure by increasing the distance between you and the source of the radiation. This could be evacuation or remaining indoors to minimize exposure.
 - If told to evacuate, keep car windows and vents closed; use re-circulating air. Bring your emergency supply kit
 - If you are advised to remain indoors, turn off the air conditioner, ventilation fans, furnace and other air intakes.
 - Shield yourself by placing heavy, dense material between you and the radiation source. Go to a basement or other underground area, if possible.
 - Do not use the telephone unless absolutely necessary.
 - Stay out of the incident zone. Most radiation loses its strength fairly quickly.

What to Do After a Nuclear Power Plant Emergency

- Go to a designated public shelter if you have been told to evacuate or you feel it is unsafe to remain in your home. Text **SHELTER + your ZIP code to 43362 (4FEMA)** to find the nearest shelter in your area (example: shelter 12345).
- Act quickly if you have come in to contact with or have been exposed to hazardous radiation.
- Follow decontamination instructions from local authorities. You may be advised to take a thorough shower.
- Change your clothes and shoes; put exposed clothing in a plastic bag; seal it and place it out of the way.
- Seek medical treatment for unusual symptoms, such as nausea, as soon as possible.
- Listen to local radio or television stations for the latest emergency information.
- Help a neighbor who may require special assistance - infants, elderly people and people with access and functional needs may require additional assistance. People who care for them or who have large families may need additional assistance in emergency situations.
- Return home only when authorities say it is safe.
- Keep food in covered containers or in the refrigerator. Food not previously covered should be washed before being put in to containers.

Where to Find Additional Information

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)—<https://www.ready.gov/nuclear-power-plants>
- U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission—<http://www.nrc.gov/about-nrc/emerg-preparedness/in-radiological-emerg.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—<http://www.bt.cdc.gov/radiation/>
- Nuclear Energy Institute—<http://www.nei.org/master-document-folder/backgrounders/fact-sheets/emergency-planning-emergency-preparedness-at-nucle>
- Ready Army—www.ready.army.mil

It's up to you. Prepare strong. Get an emergency supply kit with enough supplies for at least three days, make an emergency plan with your family and be informed about what might happen.

