

# Whitfield County EMA presents a guide to:

One of the instructions you may be given if a release of hazardous material occurs is to take shelter in place. This safety process has 6 easy steps:



## **SHELTERING IN PLACE**

1. Move or stay inside a dwelling such as a house or an office building.
2. Close and lock all windows and doors.
3. Turn off all fans, heating, and air conditioning.
4. Enter and seal the room(s) to prevent contaminants from seeping in.
5. Listen to the radio or television for further emergency instructions.
6. Do not use the phone unnecessarily- responders will need the phone lines.

1. Move or stay inside a dwelling such as a house or an office building.
  - a. This action helps prevent exposure to airborne contaminants, which can be inhaled or absorbed through the skin. Sheltering in place allows time for the substance to blow over or dissipate to a safe level.
  - b. Choose a small interior room at or above ground level if possible. If not possible, select one with the fewest windows.
  - c. Make sure the room has enough space for everyone to sit.
2. Close and lock all windows and doors.
  - a. This action will help restrict the contaminants from seeping into the building.
  - b. Close any window shades, blinds, or curtains.
3. Turn off all fans, heating, and air conditioning systems.
  - a. This action will help keep contaminated air from being drawn inside and circulated through the building.
  - b. Close fireplace dampers if present to keep from drawing outside air in.
4. Enter and seal the room(s) to prevent contaminants from seeping in.
  - a. Have this room pre-planned with plastic sheeting ready to tape on any windows in addition to your disaster supplies.
  - b. Seal all cracks around the door and air vents going into the room using duct tape, towels, and heavy plastic sheeting.
  - c. If you have a landline pre-plan keeping it in this room for emergencies.
5. Listen to the radio or television for further emergency instructions.
  - a. Local officials will give status updates on the situation, additional instructions, and the eventual "all clear" signal through CodeRed and local media.
  - b. If an area is determined to need evacuation instead of shelter in place local officials will notify these areas through CodeRed and local media.
6. Do not use the phone unnecessarily- responders will need the phone lines.
  - a. Text (preferred) or call your out-of-town contact to let them know you are sheltering in place and who you are with.
  - b. Keep your phone available and charged in case you need to report a life-threatening condition/event.
  - c. Fire, police, EMS, and emergency management will need all available phone lines to initiate rescue procedures. Cellular congestion can impact their ability to get through.