



CHEMICAL EMERGENCIES

Chemical Threat Scenario Do's and Don'ts

Common Indicators

- Affected persons will show symptoms like coughing, vomiting, tears in eyes, skin irritation, difficulty in breathing, burns and other peculiar health effects of the chemical toxicants spontaneously.

If you are in an open area

- Don't panic, stay calm.
- Inform Police, Fire & Emergency Services and Health Authorities.
- Protect your mouth and nose with a wet cloth or a handkerchief.
- Pay attention to instructions issued on Radio and Public announcement systems.
- Follow the advise/instructions of the Incident Commander, Fire and Emergency Services, Police, National/State Disaster Response Force or other intervening services like Civil Defence, Armed Forces etc.
- Attempt to find nearby shelter and immediately move indoors (in a building) or inside a car/bus/train. This creates a physical barrier between you and toxic chemical.
- Shut the doors/windows of the room/vehicle and close the ventilation system.
- If no closed area available, move in 90° direction to the movement of toxic cloud (plume) such that you are going away from incident area.
- Walk slowly, as brisk walking or running shall result in increased breathing rate thereby accumulating more of toxic chemicals.
- Have a bath at the earliest and keep your clothes in a plastic bag, it will help remove any contamination that might have occurred before you were able to get indoors. It may be done in period of one minute or less time.



If you are instructed to remain inside

- Seek shelter in an inner most room.
- Ten square feet of floor space per person will provide sufficient air to prevent carbon dioxide build-up for at the most 5 hours.
- Switch on radio, TV, internet etc., for latest information and advise.
- Turn off all ventilation systems including air coolers/conditioners, vents, fans and furnaces.
- Cover the windows and room door with wet towels or with duct tape and plastic sheets.
- Try to avoid physical exertion and deep breathing
- Tinned/packaged food kept away from any possible contamination, is safe to consume.
- Drink only from water bottles/pouches. Follow the instructions of authorities on the use of water from tap or other normal souces.
- One should not leave a shelter until authorities announce it is safe to do so.
- Exit the building as rapidly as possible and use specified vehicle for evacuation.

Evacuation / Field Decontamination

- Responders should wear gas mask or self contained breathing apparatus (SCBA) and protective gears while working at the incident site
- Evacuate first the most seriously exposed individuals and vulnerable members of community like children, woman, elderly and disabled.
- Medical stabilisation is the first priority and first aid to be given to seriously affected people followed by triage.
- Decontamination in first few minutes in safe zone can save many lives. Removal of contaminated clothes, head gears and shoes can greatly reduce the body burden of the toxic chemical. Any clothing normally removed over the head should be cut off with cloth cutter.
- Put contaminated clothes in black plastic bag, and wallet, watch, ornaments, spectacles etc., separately in a transparent plastic bag.
- Remove eyeglasses or contact lenses. Put glasses in a pan of household bleach to decontaminate.



- Look for a nearby water tap or fountain, pool or other source of water so that you can quickly and thoroughly rinse the affected body parts that may have been exposed (self-decontamination).
- Decontaminate yourself and assist in decontaminating others while ensuring that recontamination does not occur (Buddy decontamination)
- Mass decontamination will be done by emergency services.
- Decontaminate hands using soap and water. Flush eyes with lots of clean water.
- Gently wash face and hair with soap and water; then thoroughly rinse with water.
- Decontaminate other possible contaminated body areas.
- Blot (do not swab or scrape) with a cloth soaked in soapy water and rinse with clear water.
- Change into fresh uncontaminated clothes from the clean almirahs/drawers (if inside the house); otherwise, at decontamination site, these will be provided.

Don'ts

- Contaminated persons should not leave the area unless decontaminated.
- Don't consume food/drinks/water beverages etc., lying under the open sky in the contaminated areas.
- Don't move out of shelters/ from inside the Building unless so instructed by authorities.
- Don't deliberately stir up dust or brush against things while moving in contaminated areas.
- Don't smoke, eat or drink in exposed areas. Don't kneel, lie or sit on the open ground. Don't walk barefooted or in open slippers.

