

Who Helps in a Chemical Emergency?

There are many organizations that help the community in an emergency such as police, fire, and sheriff departments, the American Red Cross, and government agencies. These groups may coordinate activities through the local office of emergency management. In many areas there are local Hazardous Materials, or Haz-Mat Teams, that are trained to respond to chemical accidents. In the event of an emergency, follow the instructions of local officials responding to the incident.



Important Points to Remember (Source: American Red Cross)

- *Chemicals are everywhere. They are an important part of life.*
- *The most common chemical accidents occur in our own homes and can be prevented.*
- *The best ways to avoid chemical accidents are to read and follow the directions for use, storage, and disposal of the product.*
- *Don't mix products, especially household cleaning products.*
- *Develop a Family Disaster Plan and pack a Family Disaster Supplies Kit.*
- *In the event of an emergency, follow the instructions of the authorities carefully. Listen to your emergency broadcast stations on radio and TV.*
- *Use your phone only in life-threatening emergencies, and then call the Poison Control Center (800-222-1222), EMS or 9-1-1 immediately.*
- *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 family members and pets to a safe room seal windows and doors and listen to emergency broadcast stations for instructions.*
- *If you are told to evacuate immediately, take your Family Disaster Supply Kit. Pack only the bare essentials such as medications and leave your home*

quickly. Follow the traffic route authorities recommend. Don't take short cuts on the way to the shelter.

- If you find someone who appears to have been injured from chemical exposure make sure you are not in danger before administering first aid.*

- The best way to protect yourself and your family is to be prepared by following these key steps:*

- 1. Build a disaster supply kit.*

- 2. Create a plan for reconnecting with family members in the event of an emergency.*

- 3. Be informed of hazards in your area and listen to radio and TV for instructions if an emergency occurs.*

- If an accident involving hazardous materials occurs. you will be notified by the authorities as to what steps to take. You may hear a siren, be called by telephone, or emergency personnel may drive by and give instructions over a loudspeaker. Officials could even come to your door. If you hear a warning signal, you should go indoors and listen to a local Emergency Alert System (EAS) station for emergency instructions from officials.*