

City of Los Alamitos **Shelter-In-Place Guide**

This guide is intended to provide basic Emergency Shelter-In-Place information for employees, as well as visitors to our complex. The focus of the guide is on Shelter-In-Place protocols, with some basic emergency information included for your reference.

What Shelter-in-Place Means:

One of the instructions you may be given in an emergency where hazardous materials may have been released into the atmosphere is to shelter-in-place. This is a precaution aimed to keep you safe while remaining indoors. (This is not the same thing as going to a shelter in case of a storm.) Shelter-in-place means selecting a small, interior room with no or few windows and taking refuge there. It does not mean sealing off your entire company. If you are told to shelter-in-place, follow the instructions below.

Why You Might Need to Shelter-in-Place:

Chemical, biological or radiological contaminants may be released accidentally or intentionally into the environment. Should this occur, information will be provided by local authorities on television and radio stations on how to protect yourself. Because the information will most likely be provided on television and radio, it is important to keep a TV or radio on, even during the workday. The important thing is for you to follow instructions of local authorities and know what to do if they advise you to shelter-in-place.

How to Shelter-in-Place at Work:

- Close the business. Bring everyone into the room and shut the doors.
- If there are customers, clients or visitors in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave. When authorities provide directions to shelter-in-place, they want everyone to take those steps now, where they are, and not drive or walk outdoors.
- Unless there is an imminent threat, ask employees, customers, clients and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
- Turn on call-forwarding or alternative telephone answering services or systems. If the business has voicemail or an automated attendant, change the recording to indicate that the business is closed, and that staff and visitors are remaining in the building until authorities advise it is safe to leave.
- Close and lock all windows, exterior doors and any other openings to the outside.
- If you are told there is danger of an explosion, close the window shades, blinds or curtains.
- Have employees familiar with your building's mechanical systems turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems. Some systems automatically provide for exchange of inside air with outside air – these systems, in particular, need to be turned off, sealed or disabled.
- Gather essential disaster supplies, such as nonperishable food, bottled water, battery-powered radios, first aid supplies, flashlights, batteries, duct tape, plastic sheeting and plastic garbage bags.
- Select interior room(s) above the ground floor, with the fewest windows or vents. The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in. Avoid overcrowding

- by selecting several rooms if necessary. Large storage closets, utility rooms, pantries, copy and conference rooms without exterior windows will work well. Avoid selecting a room with mechanical equipment like ventilation blowers or pipes, because this equipment might not be able to be sealed from the outdoors.
- It is ideal to have a hard-wired telephone in the room(s) you select. Call emergency contacts and have the phone available if you need to report a life-threatening condition. Cellular telephone equipment may be overwhelmed or damaged during an emergency.
- Use duct tape and plastic sheeting (heavier than food wrap) to seal all cracks around the doors and any vents in the room.
- Write down the names of everyone in the room, and call your business' designated emergency contact to report who is in the room with you, and their affiliation with your business (employee, visitor, client or customer.)
- Keep listening to the radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate. Local officials may call for evacuation in specific areas at greatest risk in your community.

Local officials on the scene are the best source of information for your particular situation. Following their instructions during and after emergencies regarding sheltering, food, water and clean up methods is your safest choice.

Remember that instructions to shelter-in-place are usually provided for durations of a few hours, not days or weeks. There is little danger that the room in which you are taking shelter will run out of oxygen and you will suffocate.