



Office of Emergency Management



Cuyahoga County
Together We Thrive

At-A-Glance

Chemical Threats

Chemical agents are poisonous vapors, aerosols, liquids and solids that have toxic effects on people, animals or plants. They can be released by bombs or sprayed from aircraft, boats and vehicles. They can be used as a liquid to create a hazard to people and the environment. They can have an immediate effect (a few seconds to a few minutes) or a delayed effect (2 to 48 hours). While potentially lethal, chemical agents are difficult to deliver in lethal concentrations.

Before a Chemical Threat...

- Build an Emergency Supply Kit. Be sure to include:
- A roll of duct tape and scissors
- Plastic for doors, window, and vents from the room you will shelter in place. To save critical time during an emergency, pre-measure and cut the plastic sheeting for each opening.
- 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.

During a Chemical Threat...

- Quickly try to define the impacted area or where the chemical is coming from, if possible.
- Take immediate action to get away.
- If the chemical is inside a building where you are, get out of the building without passing through the contaminated area, if possible.
- If you can't get out of the building or find clean air without passing through the area where you see signs of a chemical attack, it may be better to move as far away as possible and shelter-in-place.

After a Chemical Threat...

- Decontamination is needed within minutes of exposure to minimize health consequences. Do not leave the safety of a shelter to go outdoors to help others until authorities announce it is safe to do so.
- Decontamination guidelines are as follows:
- Use extreme caution when helping others who have been exposed to chemical agents.
- Remove all clothing and other items in contact with the body. Contaminated clothing normally removed over the head should be cut off to avoid contact with the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Flush eyes with water.
- Decontaminate body areas likely to have been contaminated. Blot (do not swab or scrape) with a cloth soaked in soapy water and rinse with clear water.

Did You Know?

The presence of many dead insects or birds may indicate a chemical agent release.

For additional information on chemical threats, go to www.ready.gov.

Source: Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)



A Preparedness Resource from
Cuyahoga County Office of Emergency Management
P: 216-443-5700 | ema@cuyahogacounty.us
Ready.cuyahogacounty.us

 
[@CuyahogaOEM](https://twitter.com/CuyahogaOEM)
Facebook.com/CuyahogaOEM