

Fact Sheet:

Preparing for an Nuclear Missile Threat

What to know and what to do



Ready.Alaska.Gov

Prepare

- Build an Emergency Supply Kit.
- Make a Family Emergency Plan.
- Make a list of potential concrete shelters near your home, workplace and school. These places can include basements or the windowless center area of middle floors in multi-level buildings.
- Fallout shelters do not need to be specifically constructed for protecting against fallout. They can be protected space, provided that the walls and roof are thick and dense enough (i.e. concrete) to absorb radiation given off by fallout particles.

During

- Listen for official information and follow instructions provided by emergency response personnel. Based on what is known about the threat, you may be asked to take shelter, go to a specific location, or evacuate a specific area.
- If an attack warning is issued, take cover as quickly as you can, under concrete structure or below ground if possible, and stay there until instructed to do otherwise.
- Find the nearest building, preferably built of brick or concrete, and go inside to avoid any radioactive material outside.
- Stay where you are, even if you are separated from your family. Inside is the safest place for all people in the impacted area. It can save your life.
- Expect to stay inside for at least 24 hours unless otherwise told by authorities.

If Caught Outside

- Do not look at the flash or fireball – it can blind you.
- Take cover behind anything that might offer protection.
- Lie flat on the ground and cover your head. If the explosion is some distance away, it could take 30 seconds or more for the blast wave to hit.
- Take shelter as soon as you can, even if you are many miles from ground zero where the attack occurred – radioactive fallout can be carried by winds for miles. Remember the three protective factors: distance, shielding and time.
- If you were outside during or after the blast, get clean as soon as possible, to remove radioactive material that may have settled on your body.
- Remove your clothing to keep radioactive material from spreading. Removing the outer layer of clothing can remove up to 90% of radioactive material.
- If practical, place your contaminated clothing in a plastic bag and seal or tie the bag. Place the bag as far away as possible from humans and animals so that the radiation it gives off does not affect others.
- When possible, take a shower with a lot of soap and water to help remove radioactive contamination. Do not scrub or scratch the skin.
- Wash your hair with shampoo, or soap and water. Do not use conditioner in your hair because it will bind radioactive material to your hair.

For an emergency supply kit checklist or guidance on how to create a family emergency plan, go to Ready.Alaska.Gov

- Gently blow your nose and wipe your eyelids and eyelashes with a clean wet cloth. Gently wipe your ears.
- If you cannot shower, use a wipe or clean wet cloth to wipe your skin that was not covered by clothing.

After

- Keep listening for official information about what to do, where to go and places to avoid.
- Stay away from damaged areas, areas marked “radiation hazard” or “HAZMAT.” Remember that radiation cannot be seen, smelled or otherwise detected by human senses.

Things to Remember

- Distance: The more distance between you and the fallout particles, the better. A floor near the middle of a multi-story building is ideal. Flat roofs collect fallout particles so the top floor is not a good choice, nor is a floor adjacent to a neighboring flat roof.
- Shielding: The heavier and denser the materials – thick walls, concrete, bricks, books and earth – between you and the fallout particles, the better. If you have time, find plastic sheeting from your preparedness kit and cover doors, windows, and ventilation to keep as much of the fallout particles out of your home.
- Time: Fallout radiation loses its intensity fairly rapidly. In time, you will be able to leave a fallout shelter. Radioactive fallout poses the greatest threat to people during the first two weeks, by which time it has declined to about 1 percent of its initial radiation level.
- Remember: Any protection, however temporary, is better than none at all, and the more shielding, distance and time you can take advantage of, the better. If you are driving, pull over to the side of the road and head to the nearest concrete shelter.

What about if my kids are at school or daycare?

- School staff are trained to respond to emergencies.
- Teachers and staff have detailed plans and will carry them out before, during and after an emergency. They are trained to deal with students in different emergencies. Teachers will maintain calm and structure in the school setting.
- School buildings are safe.
- All schools are built strong and meet regulatory building standards. Regulatory agencies routinely visit the schools to make sure they are safe. Schools are often used as emergency shelters for the community because they are so safe.
- Listen to the news. Do not call the school.
- Calling the school may slow down emergency operations and make it difficult for officials to communicate directly with school staff. Stay informed through the radio, news or online sources including Facebook and Twitter.
- Be patient. Wait for instructions to pick up your child.
- Do not pick up your children. You and your children need to be off of the roads and in safe locations as soon as possible. Your children are safer in school than they are on the road. The safest course for them will be to remain at school until the all-clear is given. Once the all-clear is given, follow instructions regarding how to pick up your student. Remember that schools have emergency cards that identify who can pick up your child. Do not send someone to the school who is not listed on the emergency card as school staff will not release the student into their custody.

If your child has questions

- Answer their questions as truthfully as possible and discuss the situation as a family so everyone has a chance to process what has happened.

For an emergency supply kit checklist or guidance on how to create a family emergency plan, go to Ready.Alaska.Gov