



NUCLEAR POWER PLANT EMERGENCIES

Nuclear power plants operate under stringent safety standards, with multiple redundant systems and continuous regulatory oversight. However, despite these measures, accidents are possible. A nuclear emergency could release dangerous levels of radiation, particularly within a 10-mile radius of the plant – an area inhabited by approximately 3 million Americans. Radiation exposure poses significant health risks and can contaminate water and soil up to 50 miles away.



PREPARATION – Building Resilience

- **Emergency Supply Kit:** Assemble a kit with non-perishable food, water, radio, flashlight/batteries. *Add* plastic sheeting, duct tape, & scissors for nuclear incident preparedness. Maintain a portable kit in your vehicle. Include:
 - Medications & medical supplies
 - Bedding & clothing (sleeping bags)
 - Important documents (copies) – ID, insurance, vital records.
 - <https://www.army.mil/ready> for kit guidance.
- **Family Emergency Plan:** Establish communication & reunification plans.
 - Designate meeting locations (local & out-of-area).
 - Identify an out-of-state contact for family communication.
 - Review emergency plans at work, school, & daycare.
 - Know community warning systems & evacuation routes.
 - Include pet plans.
- **Local Information:** Obtain emergency information from the power company or local emergency services. Residents within 10 miles should receive annual updates.
- **Emergency Notification Levels (Understand These):**
- **Notification of Unusual Event:** Minor issue, no action needed.
- **Alert:** Small radiation leak *within* the plant, no public impact.
- **Site Area Emergency:** Sirens may sound – tune to radio/TV for instructions.
- **General Emergency:** Radiation *outside* the plant – sirens will sound, follow instructions immediately.

DURING AN EMERGENCY – Immediate Actions

- **Follow Official Instructions:** Heed EAS alerts on radio/TV and follow guidance precisely.
- **Maximize Distance/Shelter:**
 - **Evacuate (if ordered):** Close vehicle windows/vents, use recirculating air, bring your kit.
 - **Shelter-in-Place (if advised):** Close windows/doors, turn off HVAC, seek basement/underground shelter.
- **Limit Communication:** Avoid unnecessary phone calls.
- **Stay Clear:** Avoid the incident zone – radiation strength diminishes quickly.

AFTER AN EMERGENCY – Recovery & Safety

- **Shelter:** Go to a designated public shelter if evacuated or unsafe to remain home. Text **SHELTER + ZIP** to **43362** (4FEMA) to locate nearby shelters.
- **Decontamination:** Follow local authority instructions. Shower thoroughly.

- **Clothing:** Change clothes & shoes; seal contaminated items in plastic bags.
- **Medical Attention:** Seek immediate medical care for unusual symptoms (nausea, etc.).
- **Information:** Monitor radio/TV for updates.
- **Community Support:** Assist vulnerable neighbors (infants, elderly, disabled).
- **Return Home:** Only return when authorities declare it safe.
- **Food Safety:** Cover or wash all uncovered food items.
- **Reporting (Military/Government Personnel):** Once safe, report to your command and <https://adpaas.army.mil/>.

Where to Find Additional Information

- Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): <https://www.ready.gov/radiation>
- U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission: <https://www2.nrc.gov/about-nrc/emerg-preparedness/in-radiological-emerg>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: <https://www.cdc.gov/radiation-emergencies/index.html>
- Ready Army: <https://www.army.mil/ready>

It's up to you. Prepare strong. Get an emergency supply kit with enough supplies for at least three days, make an emergency plan with your family and be informed about what might happen. These fact sheets are intended to supplement predetermined plans and policies. Follow state, local, installation and command guidance related to threats and hazards.



U.S. ARMY