

## SHELTER IN PLACE



### Are You Ready?

Is a series of handouts designed to assist you and your family to plan ahead for emergencies.



For more information on Shelter in Place: Check out these Helpful websites:



Washington County  
Emergency Services/  
Emergency Management  
33 W. Washington St.  
Hagerstown, MD 21740  
240-313-2930



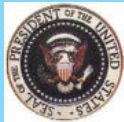
[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)



[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)



[www.hhs.gov](http://www.hhs.gov)



[www.whitehouse.gov](http://www.whitehouse.gov)

# Are You Ready?

WASHINGTON COUNTY  
HEALTH DEPARTMENT

MAY 2006

## Shelter in Place

**What "Sheltering in Place" means:** Make a shelter out of the place you are in. Stay indoors in your home, workplace or a nearby building. Once indoors, seal yourself in and do not leave until you are told it is safe to go out.

**Why would you need to "Shelter in Place?"** Some kinds of chemical accidents or attacks may make going outdoors dangerous. In a chemical emergency, officials may ask you to shelter in place. Meaning, to be safe, you must find shelter in your home, workplace or school, and stay there until an "all clear" is given. Your vehicle is a *last choice* shelter. Vehicles are not airtight enough to give you adequate protection from chemicals.

**Shelter In Place Kit:** It is important to take time to prepare your kit in advance. A shelter in place emergency will probably last only a few hours at most. Your kit at home should contain: precut plastic sheeting for the windows and vents of your preselected room, duct tape, flashlight with extra batteries, a battery-powered radio with spare batteries, a towel for sealing the bottom of the door, a few gallons of fresh water in closed containers, a few nonperishable food items, reading material and games, a cellular phone and a first-aid kit. Your kit for your *workplace* should contain: water, food, a blanket, and a change of clothing.

### SHELTER IN PLACE:

Follow these five steps when instructed to shelter in place:

1. Move people and pets indoors immediately.
2. Close and lock all windows and doors; this provides a tighter seal.
3. Turn off all heating, cooking, and ventilation devices, including window and attic fans and anything that moves air in or out of the house. Also, close fireplace dampers.
4. Move everyone into one preselected room of the house. Use duct tape and precut heavy plastic to cover doors and windows to seal the room tightly. Place a wet towel at the bottom of the door to absorb gases that may leak into the house.
5. Turn on the radio or television to the local Emergency Alert System and wait for further instructions. Stay inside until you have been told that the danger has passed. After the emergency is over, open all doors and windows and go outside until the house or shelter is well ventilated.



Move or stay inside



Close all windows and doors



Turn off ventilation systems (heating and air conditioning, fireplace dampers, etc.)



Go into a room with the fewest doors and windows and seal the room



Stay in the room until told by the authorities that it is safe to come out

## An Ounce of Prevention

### Home Safety/Security

1. Various sources indicate that simply displaying window decals and/or yard signs can decrease your chances of being burglarized by up to 75%.
2. You can help secure your windows from being slid open by placing pins through the window frames.
3. A solid door with a double deadbolt lock can delay a burglar, and time to a thief is synonymous to their own safety.
4. A piece of wood placed in the window track or pins through the window frames prevent sliding glass doors from sliding open for the wrong person.
5. Modern technology now provides many simulated dog alarm models ranging from motion to noise vibration sensors.
6. You may want to try an alarm system. You can have a security system installed professionally or you can choose from different "do it yourself" remedies.
7. Cut back bushes and trees that surround your house and windows.
8. Create the illusion that someone is home. Purchase an inexpensive timer that turns a lamp or two on at dusk and off at bedtime.
9. A strong motivator to buying a security system is that most homeowner insurance policy premiums will be reduced. Make sure to first consult with your agent regarding the type of system you want.

More information from this article:

Safe Within <http://www.safewithin.com>  
and insurance [insurance.com](http://www.insurance.com)