

## Public Information

If the protective actions of a shelter or evacuation are required by the public during a hazardous materials release, the public will be notified by one of the following means:

- **Route Alert Teams** consisting of police, fire, or emergency management volunteers will go door to door with important instructions.
- The **Emergency Alert System (EAS)** will break into local radio and TV programming with emergency information.

During the course of the emergency, the public should stay tuned to local radio or TV stations for situation updates.

Only call 911 if you require emergency police, fire, or ambulance services.

### Local Media Outlets:

WHLM 930 AM  
WHLM 103.5 FM  
WQKX 94.1 FM  
WFYY 106.5 FM

WNEP 16 TV  
WBRE 28 TV  
WYLN 35 TV

Compliments of the  
Columbia County  
Emergency Management Agency  
&  
The Local Emergency Planning Committee

Phone: 570-389-5720  
[www.columbiacountyema.org](http://www.columbiacountyema.org)

# Hazardous Materials

## Basics



Columbia  
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## Hazardous Materials Basics

Hazardous Materials are substances which, because of their chemical physical or biological properties, pose a potential risk to life, property or the environment.

A hazardous materials incident occurs when these materials are improperly used or are released from their containers in an uncontrolled state.

Hazardous materials are probably located in every home and business in the county. They come in the form of fuel, cleaning agents and pesticides to name a few.

Always read instructions before using chemical based products, because even the mixing of common household cleaning agents could be the cause of deadly vapors.

Hazardous materials incidents could also occur at industrial facilities that use these products or along transportation routes used in shipping.

Exposure to some hazardous materials could cause immediate or long term health consequences.

## Public Protective Actions

When there is a release of hazardous materials, the on-scene incident commander from emergency services may recommend sheltering or evacuation to protect the public from danger.

**Shelter** means to seek protection indoors so you are not exposed to the vapors emitted by a hazardous materials release.

For this technique to be effective, all windows, doors, vents and fireplace dampers must be closed. Heating, ventilation and air conditioning units that draw outside air must be turned off.

An **Evacuation** will be ordered if there is a potential for conditions to become extremely dangerous due to a release of hazardous materials.

Evacuations may be ordered with very little warning. Persons should have an inventory prepared listing those items you may want to gather in a hurry.

In large evacuations, a Red Cross shelter will be opened for displaced persons.

## Family Emergency Planning

Every family should have a written family emergency plan. The plan should list the emergencies that could happen and the protective actions to be taken.

The document should also contain important telephone numbers, family meeting places, supplies needed for sheltering and items to be taken with you if you're evacuated.

### **In-home shelter supplies:**

- Battery operated radio
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- 3-day supply of non-perishable food
- 3-day supply of drinking water
- 1st Aid kit
- Auxiliary heat source

### **Evacuation supplies:**

- Medicine
- Drinking water
- Non-perishable food
- Change of clothing and shoes
- Blankets & pillows
- Personal care items
- Personal phone book
- Keys & money
- Important documents
- Flashlight & battery operated radio
- 1st Aid kit