

# Shelter in Place

Whether you are at home, work or elsewhere, there may be situations when it's best to stay where you are and avoid any uncertainty outside. Shelter-in-Place is a standard protective action utilized in Emergency Management. It is most often used during an event in which hazardous materials have been accidentally released into the atmosphere, but also during other dangerous conditions, such as hurricanes, flooding, blizzards, or law enforcement activity when it's safest to remain indoors.

## Being Alerted of a Shelter-in-Place

As with an [Evacuation](#), you could be alerted in a variety of ways to a shelter-in-place request. Learn what methods are utilized in your community. They could include:

- Local notification systems such as “Reverse 9-1-1 type” systems. These systems usually require opt-in/registration in advance, so check with your local public safety officials about which system they use and how to register.
- Local notifications from public safety vehicles public address announcements or door to door notifications.
- Outdoor sirens.
- Commercial media.
- MEMA’s [Ping4 smartphone app](#)
- MEMA’s [Twitter](#) or [Facebook](#) accounts or the social media accounts of a public safety agency in your community.
- The Emergency Alert System (EAS) via radio and television.
- [Wireless Emergency Alerts](#).
- All Hazards National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio.
- U.S. Coast Guard Marine Broadcast
- A message on Teletypewriters (TTY).

## Planning for Shelter-in-Place

- Assemble an [Emergency Kit](#) to keep in your home. These items and supplies may be necessary during a shelter-in-place when you are not able to leave your home.
- If you undergo routine medical treatments or receive home health services, work with your service provider in advance to understand options during an emergency where you could not leave your home and service providers could not come to your home.
- Learn how to shut off any systems that involve air handling in case you are asked to turn them off, including fans, air conditioners, kitchen & bath exhaust fans, forced hot air heating systems and other sources of outside air.

## **If You Are Asked to Shelter-in-Place**

- Bring all family members and pets indoors. Remain indoors until instructed otherwise.
- Close and lock all windows and doors to ensure a tight seal.
- Do not call your 9-1-1 unless you have an emergency. Call 2-1-1 for information or questions.
- Stay tuned to your Emergency Alert System radio station or other news media to get updated information.
- Locate your [Emergency Kit](#) and keep it nearby in case you need it.
- Since emergency conditions can change quickly, be prepared in case you need to leave your home during an [Evacuation](#) .

## **If the Shelter-in-Place is Due to Hazardous Materials Outside, Additionally:**

- Close drapes, blinds and window shades.
- Go to a room in the center of your home with the fewest windows and doors.
- Close and lock all windows and doors to ensure a tight seal.
- Be prepared to shut off any systems that involve air handling in case you are asked to turn them off, including fans, air conditioners, kitchen & bath exhaust fans, forced hot air heating systems and other sources of outside air if asked to do so.
- Close the fireplace flue if it is not in use
- Seal off any cracks that could cause leakage to the outside.
- Keep pets indoors.
- If you have livestock and can do so safely, shelter them and provide them with stored feed and water from a covered source.
- Stay inside until officials say otherwise. If you must go outside, cover your nose and mouth with a folded damp cloth.