

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

BE SAFE IN YOUR HOME



FLORENCE COUNTY LEPC

What is a Hazardous Substance?



(1) A hazardous substance means any substance, material, waste, or mixture designated as a hazardous material, waste according to 49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 172 as amended, or by section 18-13-112. Or as designated pursuant to the federal “Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability act of 1980 as in effect July 1, 1983.

Hazardous substances are common both in the workplace and at home. Examples of some household items are bleach, ammonia, paints, cleaning solvents, soaps, and mixing of different chemicals in the home are usually what leads to the incident. They are used by many industries, small businesses, government agencies, and private citizens. Your community plans and prepares for the accidental release of hazardous materials.

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA)

The Emergency Planning and Right-to-Know Act was passed in 1986. It created a Working partnership between federal, state, and local governments, the public and industry to identify potential chemical hazards in the community and to do emergency planning for chemical accidents.

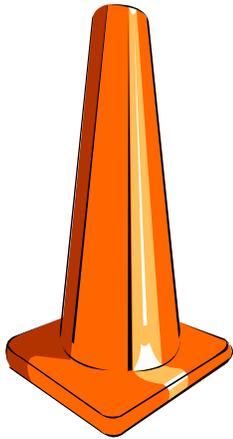
South Carolinas EPCRA is coordinated by the South Carolina Emergency Planning Commission (SERC). In South Carolina there are 46 counties that each have a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC). Florence County's LEPC is made up of representatives from local industries, Emergency Management Office, fire departments, EMS, police departments, DHEC and many others.

LEPC activities include emergency response planning, training, exercising, education and outreach, program administration and local program initiatives. The Florence County LEPC uses the County Wide Emergency Operations Plan that identifies the hazards in your community and contains emergency response procedures for hazardous materials releases. For more information please call the Florence County Office of Emergency Management at 843-665-7255.



Hazardous Substance Emergencies

“Hazardous substance incident” means any emergency circumstance involving the sudden discharge of a hazardous substance which threatens immediate and irreparable harm to the environment or the health and safety of any individual other than the individuals exposed to the risks associated with hazardous substances in the normal course of their duties such as a Hazmat Team.



Hazardous substance incident includes those incidents of spilling, dumping, or abandonment of a hazardous substance whether or not it is found to threaten immediate and irreparable harm, but such term does not include any discharge of a hazardous substance authorized pursuant to any federal, state, or local law or regulation. It also includes those incidents that occur during transportation in which a spill happens and must be contained.

In short a hazardous material emergency occurs when a hazardous amount of a chemical or other substance is accidentally released. Accidents could happen underground, on railroad tracks, or highways, at manufacturing plants and in your home. These accidents sometimes result in fire and explosion, but many times you cannot see or smell anything unusual.



Who Helps in a Hazardous Substance Emergency?



There are many organizations that help the community in an emergency, such as Fire, EMS, Police, Sheriff, Hazmat Team, American Red Cross, Salvation Army, and Governmental Agencies. All these groups will be coordinated through the Florence County Dispatch Center (911). Florence County has a Countywide Hazmat Team that is trained to respond to incidents involving hazardous substances. In the event of a hazardous material emergency, it is very important that you follow the instructions of these highly trained professionals. They know best how to protect you and your family.

Important Points to Remember

- Hazardous substances/chemicals are everywhere. They are an important part of life.
- The most common chemical accidents occur in our own homes and can be prevented.
- The best ways to avoid chemical accidents are to read and follow the directions for use, storage, and disposal of the product.
- Don't mix products, especially household cleaning products.
- Develop a Family Disaster Plan and make a Family Disaster Kit. Information can be found at www.ready.gov
- In the event of an emergency, follow the instructions of the authorities carefully. Listen to your emergency broadcast stations on radio and TV.
- If you are told to evacuate immediately, take your Family Disaster Supplies Kit. Pack only the bare essentials, such as medications, and leave your home quickly.
- The best way to protect yourself and family is to be prepared.

How you may be Notified of a Hazardous Substance Emergency.

In the event of a hazardous substance emergency, you will be notified by the authorities. You may receive a phone call from South Carolina REACH notification system, or emergency personnel may drive by and give instructions over a loudspeaker, or officials could send Fire, or Police to your door. Once you have been notified please take the actions that the officials inform you to take.

You will be told:

The type of health hazard

The area affected

How to protect yourself

Evacuation routes (if necessary)

Shelter locations

Type and location of Medical facilities

Phone numbers to call for addition information if needed

**PLEASE DO NOT TIE UP 911 LINES
ONLY USE FOR LIFE THREATENING
EMERGENCIES**

Shelter in Place



One of the basic instructions you may be given in a hazardous substance emergency is to “shelter in place” This is a precaution aimed to keep your family safe while remaining in your home. If you are told to shelter in place, take your children and pets indoors immediately. Close all doors and windows in your home, turn off all fans, heating and air conditioning systems, close the damper to the fireplace, go to an above ground room with the fewest windows and doors. Be sure to take your **Family Disaster Supplies Kit** with you, if you are told there is danger of explosion close the window shades and stay away from windows. Stay in that room and listen to your radio until you are told that it is safe or you are notified to evacuate.

Evacuation

Authorities may decide to evacuate an area for your protection, Again, it is important to stay calm, listen carefully and follow all instructions. If you are told to evacuate, listen to your radio to make sure the evacuation order applies to you and to understand if you are to go immediately or if you have time to pack some essentials. Please stay off the telephone so that you can be contacted if necessary.

If you are told to evacuate immediately:

Close and lock your windows

Shut off all vents

Lock the Door

Move quickly and calmly

Take your **Family Disaster Supplies Kit**

including the following:

Medications

Change of clothes for every family member

Eyeglasses, dentures, hearing aids, walker, canes or items like that.

Items such as toothbrush, deodorant, etc

Items for your baby such as diapers, formula, or baby food.

Do not assume that a shelter will have everything you need. In most cases the shelters will provide only emergency items such as meals, cots and blankets.

You don't need to turn off your refrigerator or freezer, but you should turn off all other appliances and lights before locking your home as you leave.

Check on neighbors to make sure they have been notified and offer to help those with disabilities or other special need. If you need a ride please ask a neighbor.



Please take your pets with you, but remember that most shelters do not allow for pets, so as a part of your Family Plan determine where they will be taken prior to any emergency. This will keep all members of the family safe. A good plan saves lives.

Emergency procedures for Parents of School Children



In an emergency your children may be sheltered in place or evacuated from school to a safe location. If protective actions are being taken at your children's school, do not go to the school. School personnel are trained to handle emergencies. The school will notify you of the location of your children and where and when they can be picked up. Please do not call the school or 911 trying to obtain this information, it only ties up emergency lines. Every parent should become familiar with your child's school plan and know in advance where the children will be located. At the beginning of every school year always ask to review the school emergency protective plan. Being prepared before the incident is the best way to ensure safety of your family. Please learn the policies at your child's school.

Hazardous Substance Exposure

If you believe that you or someone in your home has been exposed to a hazardous substance call 911. Be able to describe what happened if you can and how many people are involved.

If you did not see what happened and you see or smell something that would make you think that someone had been exposed, do not enter the area unless it is safe to do so. Stop and look around and dial 911 to get the proper responders in route to assist you.

If you remain in an area that someone is unconscious due to a hazardous substance you will shortly be overcome yourself, If you can deem it safe remove the victim to an area with fresh air, if trained in First Aid or CPR administer the appropriate treatment and then deal with the chemical injuries.

Always dial 911 before assisting, so help will be on the way to assist you