

Fact Sheet

Disaster



Chemical Hazards During a Disaster

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During emergencies such as severe storms, floods, and other disasters, chemicals that have the potential to harm people’s health might be released from businesses, homes, and other sources into the environment.

Be aware of Local Sources of Chemicals

Be aware of the sources of chemicals and conditions in the area. During emergencies, chemicals are most commonly released from the following sources:

- Business and industries (such as chemical plants and oil refineries)
- Storage tanks and pipelines
- Agricultural facilities
- Homes
- Transportation Industries
 - Rail
 - Ship
 - Trucks

For immediate assistance, call the Poison Control Center Hotline: 1-800-222-1222.

If a person suspects that a pet has been poisoned by a chemical, call the Animal Poison Center at 1-888-426-4435.

The types and amounts of chemicals released depend on factors such as:

- Type of facilities in the area
- Structural damage
- Weather conditions
- Extent of flooding or run-off

Dispose of Household Chemicals Safely

Everyday items such as household cleaners, fertilizers, and pesticides that may spill in or near the home during an emergency can be dangerous, especially for children and pets. Be alert for leaking containers and “reactive” household chemicals, such as caustic drain cleaners and chlorine bleach, and take the following necessary precautions to prevent injury or further damage:

- Watch children and pets carefully. Keep them away from leaking or spilled chemicals.
- Do not combine chemicals from leaking or damaged containers, because doing so might produce dangerous reactions.
- Do not dump chemicals down drains, storm sewers, or toilets.
- Do not try to burn household chemicals.
- Clearly mark and set aside unbroken containers until they can be properly disposed.
- Leave damaged or unlabeled chemical containers undisturbed whenever possible.



For more sources of information on this topic visit or contact:
ST. CLAIR COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT www.scchealth.co
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION www.cdc.gov
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY HEALTH TOXICS AND HEALTH HOTLINE: 1-800-648-6942
MICHIGAN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY ADMINISTRATION (MIOSHA): 517-322-1814
AGENCY FOR TOXIC SUBSTANCES AND DISEASE REGISTRY: www.atsr.cdc.gov 1-888-422-8737