

## What Are Extremely Hazardous Materials?

There are thousands of chemicals defined by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration as chemicals which represent a physical or health hazard. Approximately 360 of these substances are classified as "extremely hazardous".

Extremely hazardous substances can be in liquid, gas, or solid form. Exposure to these chemicals can cause serious illness or death.

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act allows citizens and communities to focus on facilities which have present extremely hazardous substances at or above federally established threshold planning quantities, for purposes of emergency planning and response. Although many of these chemicals are used every day they may not be widely recognized as "extremely hazardous".

### Selected examples of Extremely Hazardous Substances and their common use

<b>Adiponitrile</b> (insecticide)	<b>Nitric acid</b> (for etching steel)
<b>Ammonia</b> (fertilizer)	<b>Paraquat</b> (herbicide)
<b>Chlorine</b> (disinfectant)	<b>Phenol</b> (disinfectant)
<b>Formaldehyde</b> (preservative)	<b>Sulfuric acid</b> (used in batteries)
<b>Hydroquinone</b> (photo developer)	<b>Sulfur Dioxide</b> (food additive)
<b>Methyl Bromide</b> (refrigerant)	<b>Dry cleaning materials</b>

## For Your Protection

State and local governments have established minimal safety guidelines for your protection in the event of a hazardous materials accident. Emergency officials will provide timely, accurate information and instructions. Do as they say.

### If you are told to protect your breathing:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a large wet bath towel or cloth.

### If you are told to stay indoors:

- Remain indoors until further notice.
- Close all doors and windows. Use masking tape or a damp towel to seal the opening, if possible.
- Turn off all types of ventilation, unless otherwise instructed.
- Do not use fireplaces and close the dampers.
- Cover or refrigerate any uncovered food.
- Stay tuned to a local radio or television station for official information.

### If you are told to evacuate:

- Lock all doors and windows.
- Turn off appliances (except refrigerator) and faucets.

- Leave pets inside your home with plenty of food and water. Do not take pets to reception center or shelter.
- Keep your car vents and windows closed. Do not use the heater or air conditioner. **Drive carefully!**
- **Take the following items with you:**
  - Clothes for a few days.
  - Medicine or prescriptions you may need.
  - Toiletries (bar of soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, shaving articles, eye care and sanitary items).
  - Money (cash, credit cards) and important documents.
  - Baby needs such as: formula, diapers and other emergency items.
  - Portable radio and batteries.
  - Sleeping bag or two blankets and a pillow for each person.
  - Folding cot or lawn chair.
- Listen to a local radio or television station. Emergency officials will tell you what to do.
- Follow all evacuation directions. Remain calm.

### If you have family in a nursing home or hospital:

- These facilities follow their own evacuation procedures, so please do not try to pick up your relative.
- Check with these facilities in advance to determine their evacuation procedures.
- Local radio and television stations will announce where patients are being moved.

### If your children are in school:

- If your children are in school during an accident, please do not try to pick them up. They will be transported to pickup areas outside any affected area, if necessary. Local radio and television stations will announce when and where parents can pick up their children. School personnel will supervise and care for the children until parents pick them up.

### If you have livestock:

- Place the animals in an enclosed shelter, if possible.
- Leave plenty of water and food for several days.
- Use stored feed if possible.
- Tune to a local radio or television station for further instructions.

### If you grow food products:

- Do not eat or sell products.
- Protective actions (such as washing, discarding, etc.) are specific to the crops affected and their maturity at the time of contamination.
- Tune to a local radio or television station for additional instructions. For more information, contact your local agricultural extension agent.



## What is the Purpose of the Right-To-Know Legislation?

The Emergency Planning and Community Right-To-Know Act (EPCRA) was passed by Congress as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1986. It establishes requirements for a unique public/private partnership of federal, state and local governments, and industry for planning and reporting of hazardous and toxic chemicals. The Florida Hazardous Materials Emergency Response and Community Right-To-Know Act of 1988, implements the federal legislation and provides a funding mechanism to support program activities.

### The intent of the legislation is two fold:

1. To develop plans to respond quickly in the event of an accident, spill or release of hazardous materials; and
2. To increase the public's knowledge and access to information on the presence of hazardous chemicals in the community and releases of the chemicals into the environment.

## How Can Citizens Become Involved With the Implementation of This Law?

The Federal Law requires the establishment of a Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC) for your community. The LEPC is in charge of developing comprehensive emergency plans, acting as a clearinghouse for chemical storage, chemical safety and release information, and making such information available to the public. Citizen input is quite important to the functioning of the LEPC. The committee must have representation from elected government officials; law enforcement, emergency management, fire fighting, first-aid, health, environmental, hospital, and transportation personnel; broadcast and print media; community groups; and owners and operators of facilities subject to the reporting requirements.

You may exercise your right to obtain information about potential chemical hazards present in your community as outlined in the remaining parts of this brochure. If you become aware of a release of an extremely hazardous substance into the environment, you may report it to the proper authorities such as the local fire or police department in the area, the National Response Center (1-800-424-8802) or the Florida State Warning Point (1-800-320-0519).

## What Information is Being Gathered?

Your LEPC maintains a list of facilities in your community that are regulated under EPCRA. They also have a list of extremely hazardous substances that each facility has present at or above the federally established threshold planning quantities and reports of releases of those materials into the environment (above a specified reportable amount) which have occurred. Your LEPC should also have access to health and safety data on each of these hazardous substances.

To maintain a delicate balance between the public's right to know and the rights of private enterprise, the law does allow some of the information provided to the LEPC and the state to be designated as a trade secret. However, this protection does not apply to the health and safety information about hazardous substances that are used. There also are provisions for disclosing trade secret information under certain circumstances to health professionals who may need it. Citizens may challenge trade secret claims by petitioning the Federal Environmental Protection Agency.

## How Do I Obtain Information About EPCRA?

To obtain a copy of the current statutes or the most recent lists of hazardous substances, simply make a written request to your LEPC, explaining why you need this information. If you experience any difficulty or need other information not available through your LEPC, write the State Emergency Response Commission (SERC) at 2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-2149 or call 850- 413-9970 or 1-800-635-7179 in Florida. If you have access to the Internet, you can get copies of the rules and a variety of technical assistance materials at their web site <http://www.dca.state.fl.us/cps/SERC/serc.htm>.

## Will It Cost Me Any Money?

The information is intended for public use and generally can be obtained without any direct cost to you. A nominal copying fee may be charged for copies of statutes and chemical lists.

## Are There Penalties for Non-compliance by Regulated Facilities?

The law provides severe civil penalties for each violation and for each day that the violation continues. Willful violation may result in both civil and criminal penalties.

STATE EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMISSION AND  
LOCAL EMERGENCY PLANNING COMMITTEES



District

- 1 **WEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
Post Office Box 486 • Pensacola 32593-0486  
(850) 595-8910 s/c 695-8910 FAX: (850) 595-8967

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- 2 **APALACHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
314 E. Central Ave., Fim. 119 • Blountstown 32424  
(850) 674-4571 s/c 771-4417 FAX: (850) 674-4574  
Tallahassee Office (850) 488-6211 FAX: (850) 488-1616

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- 3 **NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
2009 N.W. 67 Place, Suite A • Gainesville 32653  
(352) 955-2200 ext. 108 s/c 625-2200 FAX: (352) 955-2209

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- 4 **NORTHEAST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
9143 Phillips Highway, Suite 350 • Jacksonville 32256  
(904) 363-6375 ext. 147 s/c 874-6350 FAX: (904) 363-6356

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- 5 **WITHLACOCHEE REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
1241 S.W. 10th Street • Ocala 34474-2798  
(352) 732-1315 ext. 229 s/c 667-1315 FAX: (352) 732-1319

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- 6 **EAST CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
631 Wymore Road • Maitland 32789  
(407) 623-1075 ext. 335 s/c 334-1075 FAX: (407) 623-1084

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- 7 **CENTRAL FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
Post Office Drawer 2089 • Bartow 33831  
(863) 534-7130 ext. 104 s/c 549-7130 FAX: (863) 534-7138

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- 8 **TAMPA BAY REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
9455 Koger Blvd., Suite 219 • St. Petersburg 33702-2491  
(727) 570-5151 ext. 248 s/c 513-5066 FAX: (727) 570-5118

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- 9 **SOUTHWEST FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
Post Office Box 3455 • North Ft. Myers 33918-3455  
(941) 656-7720 s/c 749-7720 FAX: (941) 656-7724

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- 10 **TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
301 East Ocean Blvd., Suite 300 • Stuart 34994  
(561) 221-4060 s/c 269-4060 FAX: (561) 221-4067

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- 11 **SOUTH FLORIDA REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL**  
3440 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 140 • Hollywood 33021  
(954) 985-4416 s/c 473-4416 FAX: (954) 985-4417

For further information or assistance, please call the Department of  
Community Affairs' Hazardous Materials Planning Section at: 850-413-9970  
or 1-800-635-7179 (Florida only).

Or visit our web site:  
<http://www.dca.state.fl.us/cps/SERC/serc.htm>

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**Florida Department of Community Affairs**  
 State Emergency Response Commission  
 2555 Shumard Oak Boulevard  
 Tallahassee, FL 32399-2149

**Are You Prepared...  
For A Hazardous Material Incident?**



HAZARDOUS MATERIALS CITIZEN'S GUIDE

Hazardous materials are common in our environment both in the work place and in the home. These materials are used not only by heavy industry, but also by government, small businesses and by private citizens. If any material, either alone or in combination with other substances, has the potential to threaten human health, it is considered hazardous.

Hazardous materials are most commonly seen stored at business or industrial sites in tanks, drums or cylinders, or being transported in bulk by either trucks, rail or water. Even everyday items such as gasoline, natural gas and chlorine can produce deadly results if handled improperly or spilled.



The key to safety is knowing what to do when an accidental release occurs. This pamphlet provides you with basic information and guidance to protect yourself and others from hazardous materials if they are accidentally released in your community.

If there is an emergency, you will be informed by the news media and the local authorities. Tune to your local radio and TV stations to obtain important information quickly and accurately. Follow their directions carefully and thoroughly. These stations should be a part of the Emergency Broadcast System and work closely with the local authorities to broadcast the necessary information that you will need to know. Contact your local city or county government emergency agency for a listing of Emergency Broadcast System stations in your area.

If you see an accident or incident that may involve hazardous materials, please notify the emergency authorities at "911" or your local fire or police officials, and briefly report what you have seen. Let authorities handle the situation from there. **Do not approach a hazardous materials emergency scene. You may endanger your life and the lives of others.**

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