

How Do I Shelter-in-Place?

at home | in my vehicle | at work | at day-care centers and schools

Admittedly, taking shelter in a vehicle may be an uncomfortable experience, particularly in very hot or very cold weather. Still, such discomfort is safer than possibly exposing yourself to chemical or radiological contaminants in the outside air. Having a portable disaster supplies kit in your vehicle could make the experience less unpleasant.

The appropriate steps depend on the emergency situation. If you hear a warning signal, listen to local radio or television stations for further information. You will be told what to do, including where to find the nearest shelter if you are away from your "shelter-in-place" location.

1. If you are very close to home, your workplace or a public building, go there immediately and go inside. Follow the "shelter-in-place" recommendations for that location.
2. If you are unable to get indoors quickly and safely, then pull over to the side of the road. Stop your vehicle in the safest place possible. If it is sunny outside, it is preferable to stop under a bridge or in a shady spot to avoid being overheated.
3. Turn off the engine.
4. Close windows and vents.
5. If possible, seal the heating, ventilating, and air conditioning vents with duct tape or anything else you may have available.
6. Listen to the radio periodically for updated advice and instructions. (Modern car radios consume very little battery power and should not affect your ability to start your car later.)
7. Stay where you are until you are told it is safe to get back on the road. Be aware that some roads may be closed or traffic detoured. Follow the directions of law enforcement officials.

Supplies for your vehicle could include:

- Bottled water and non-perishable foods such as granola bars.
- Seasonal supplies: Winter—blanket, hat, mittens, shovel, sand, tire chains, windshield scraper, florescent distress flag; Summer—sunscreen lotion (SPF 15 or greater), shade item (umbrella, wide brimmed hat, etc).
- Flashlight, extra batteries, and maps.
- First aid kit and manual.
- White distress flag.
- Tire repair kit, booster/jumper cables, pump, and flares.

For more information, contact any of the following:

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Your local American Red Cross chapter

- **Your state and local health departments**
- **The Humane Society of the United States**
- **Your local emergency management agency**
- **CDC Public Response Hotline (English 1-888-246-2675, Spanish 1-888-246-2857, TTY 1-866-874-2646)**

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