

**GUIDE TO**  
**TERRORISM PREPAREDNESS**  
**FOR**  
**DORCHESTER COUNTY CITIZENS**



This brochure was compiled by:  
THE BIOTERRORISM PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM  
of THE DORCHESTER COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
in coordination with  
THE DORCHESTER COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY  
and with assistance from  
THE CAROLINE COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
BIOTERRORISM PREPAREDNESS PROGRAM

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **Emergency Only Dial 9-1-1**

Dorchester County Emergency Management Agency	410-228-1818
Dorchester County Bioterrorism Preparedness Program	410-228-3223
Dorchester County Health Department	410-228-3223
American Red Cross - Eastern Shore Office	410-822-2313
Dorchester County Sheriff's Department	410-228-4141
Cambridge Police Department	410-228-3333
Hurlock Police Department	410-943-4020
Maryland State Police	410-822-3101
Maryland Terrorism Hotline (in MD only)	1-800-492-8477 (TIPS)
Maryland Joint Terrorism Task Force	410-944-7988
(Toll Free Number)	1-866-258-5883

## **WEB SITES of INTEREST:**

[www.mema.state.md.us](http://www.mema.state.md.us)

[www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov)

[www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

[www.dhmh.state.md.us](http://www.dhmh.state.md.us)

[www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

[www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov)

[www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)

## **MESSAGE TO THE CITIZENS OF DORCHESTER COUNTY**

In the wake of the tragic events of September 11, 2001, and the anthrax attacks during that same year, the lives of all Americans have been changed forever. Bioterrorism is a threat to all of us, whether we live in the urban area of New York City or the quiet countryside of Dorchester County, Maryland.

The information contained in this booklet is meant to be used as a reference for you and your family to better prepare and, if needed, respond to a bioterrorist threat should there ever be one in our county.

While there is no way to predict what will happen or what your personal circumstances will be, there are simple things you can do now to prepare yourself and your loved ones. Please read it and keep it handy. If you have any questions, please call the Dorchester County Health Department's Bioterrorism Preparedness Program at 410-228-3223 or the Emergency Management Agency at 410-228-1818.

Terrorism forces us to make a choice; we can be afraid or we can be ready.

*Fortunately, the chance of being injured or killed in a terrorist incident is remote. While not minimizing the tragedy of September 11 and the anthrax release later that year, every month more people die from automobile accidents than died in the collapse of the World Trade Center. Dorchester County citizens, however, cannot become complacent and assume "it can't happen here." Moreover, they must not allow the threat of terrorism to prevent them from living normal lives. The key to managing this dilemma is to remain alert, report suspicious objects and activities to authorities, and have a plan on how to react if an emergency arises, regardless of the time of day or location.*

## **HOW TO PREPARE**

Being prepared makes sense, whether it is for a natural disaster or a terrorist attack. We must have tools in place to make it on our own, at least for a period of time, no matter where we are when disaster strikes. Here is some information that will help you be more prepared for the unexpected.

### **EMERGENCY SUPPLIES FOR YOUR DISASTER KIT**

#### **FOOD AND WATER**

If you have a well, it is preferable to buy bottled water instead of storing from your own water supply. Store one gallon of water per person per day for drinking.

Store food that will not go bad and does not have to be heated or cooked. Choose foods that your family will eat, such as fruit bars, dry cereal or granola, canned foods, peanut butter, crackers and baby foods.

#### **CLOTHING**

At least one complete change of clothing and shoes per person is suggested. It is good to have long sleeves, long pants and comfortable shoes.

#### **BASIC SUPPLIES**

A flashlight, battery powered radio, extra batteries, non-electric can opener, duct tape and plastic (see how this is used in the "Sheltering in Place" section), paper plates, plastic utensils, and an area map are some of the items that will be helpful during times of emergency.

#### **SPECIAL ITEMS**

Depending on your family needs, you may have to have such things as formula, diapers, powdered milk, prescription medications, insulin, etc., and important family documents kept in a watertight container. These documents might be birth certificates, marriage licenses, wills, bank account numbers, deeds, credit card numbers, passports, and insurance policies.

## WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF INSTRUCTED TO "SHELTER IN PLACE" OR "EVACUATE"

First of all, LEARN OUR ALERT SYSTEM. In case of a disaster, or a need to evacuate, sirens at fire stations throughout Dorchester County will sound a rapid up and down tone for 3 minutes. This tone will be unlike the tone for fire or medical emergencies. This is your cue to turn on the radio WCEM 106.3 FM or 1240 AM and listen for emergency instructions.

Depending upon your circumstances and the nature of the attack, the first important decision is whether you stay put or get away. Use common sense, and available information, including what you are learning from this booklet, to determine if there is immediate danger. If you are specifically told to evacuate or seek medical treatment, do so immediately.

### SHELTER IN PLACE

The purpose of sheltering in place is to immediately protect yourself and your family by remaining inside your home or place of work. If you are asked to shelter in place:

- Close and lock all windows and exterior doors, close fireplace dampers and turn off all fans, heating and air-conditioning systems.
- Get your disaster supplies kit and go to an interior room without windows that is above ground level. (In case of a chemical threat, an above ground location is preferable because some chemicals are heavier than air and may seep into basements even if the windows are closed). If it is radiation, below ground is preferred.
- Using duct tape and plastic, seal all cracks around the doors and vents into the room. Consider precutting plastic sheeting, cutting each one to be several inches larger than the space you want to cover so that it lies flat against the wall.
- Keep listening to your radio or television until you are told all is safe or you are told to evacuate.
- **Do not attempt to pick up your children from their school or day care.** They will be cared for in accordance with existing emergency plans and you will be informed how to re-unite with them. Remember, if you are told to shelter in place it is because it is a matter of survival. It is to their advantage, as well as yours, to stay inside until told otherwise.

## EVA CUATLON

The purpose of evacuation is to remove residents from a potential hazard area.

If you are asked to evacuate, prepare to move your family to a friend or relative's home **outside** of the hazard area. If you are not going to a public shelter, take your pets if at all possible. If you must go to a public shelter, leave food and water for pets and confine them to a small area since pets are not allowed in public shelters unless they are service animals.

- If you don't have a predetermined place to go, listen to Dorchester County's local emergency alert station-WCEM 106.3 FM or 1240 AM-for the location of the shelters.
- Do not use the telephone unless you need to request special assistance.
- if you have time, close and lock window and doors, close fireplace dampers and turn off all fans, including heaters or air conditioners.
- Take your disaster supplies kit with you.
- Provide assistance to your neighbors, especially the elderly and disabled.
- While in transit, keep your vehicle windows and air vents closed and use travel routes specified by local authorities.
- Listen to your local EAS radio station for emergency information (WCEM 106.3 FM or 1240 AM)
- Do not return home unless you are told it is safe.

## SPECIFIC TERRORIST THREATS

It is important to remember there are significant differences among potential terrorist threats that will influence the decisions you make and the actions you take. By beginning a process of learning about these specific threats, you are preparing yourself to react in an emergency.

### BIOLOGICAL THREAT

A biological attack is the deliberate release of germs or other biological substances that can make you sick. Many agents must be inhaled, enter through a cut in the skin or be eaten to make you sick. Some biological agents, such as anthrax, do not cause contagious diseases. Others, like the smallpox virus, can result in diseases you can catch from other people.

In the event of a biological attack, public health official will provide information on what you should do as quickly as they can. However, it can take time for them to determine exactly what the illness is, how it should be treated and who is in danger. What you can do is watch TV, listen to the radio or check the Internet for official news including the following: Are you in the group or area authorities considered in danger? What are the signs and symptoms of the disease? Are medications or vaccines being distributed? Where? Who should get them? Where should you seek emergency medical care if you become sick?

At the time of a declared biological emergency, if a family member becomes sick, it is important to be suspicious. However, do not automatically assume you should go to a hospital emergency room or that any illness is the result of the biological attack. Symptoms of many common illnesses may overlap. Use common sense, practice good hygiene and cleanliness to avoid spreading germs, and seek medical advice.

### CHEMICAL THREAT

A chemical attack is the deliberate release of a toxic gas, liquid or solid that can poison people and the environment. Watch for signs of a chemical attack such as many people suffering from watery eyes, twitching, choking, having trouble breathing or losing coordination. Many sick or dead birds, fish or small animals are also cause for suspicion. If you see signs of a chemical attack, quickly try to define the impacted area or where the chemical is coming from. Take immediate action to get away from the area. If you think you have been exposed to a chemical, remove all clothing and wash with soap, careful not to scrub the chemical into your skin. Seek emergency medical attention as quickly as possible.

### NUCLEAR THREAT

A nuclear blast is an explosion with intense light and damaging pressure wave and widespread radioactive material that can contaminate the air, water and ground surfaces for miles around. While experts may predict at this time that a nuclear attack is less likely than others, terrorism by its nature is unpredictable. If there is a flash or fireball, take cover immediately below ground if possible, though any shield or shelter will help protect you from the immediate effects of the blast and the pressure wave. In order to limit the amount of radiation you are exposed to, think about shielding, distance and time. If you have a thick shield between yourself and the radioactive materials, it will absorb more of the radiation and you will be exposed to less. Similarly, the farther away you are from the blast and the fallout, the lower your exposure. Finally, minimizing time spent exposed will also reduce your risk.

### DIRTY BOMB

A radiation threat or "Dirty Bomb" is the use of common explosives to spread radioactive materials over a target! It is not a nuclear blast. The force of the explosion and radioactive contamination will be more localized. While the blast will be immediately obvious, the presence of radiation may not be clearly defined until trained personnel with specialized equipment are on the scene. As with any radiation, you should try to limit your exposure. Think about shielding, distance and time.

## Homeland Security Advisory System Recommendations

### INDIVIDUAL

<b>SEVERE (Red)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Severe — Recommended Actions</b></li> <li>• <i>Complete recommended actions at lower level.</i></li> <li>• Listen to radio/TV for current information/instructions.</li> <li>• Be alert to suspicious activity and report it to proper authorities immediately.</li> <li>• Contact business to determine status of work day.</li> <li>• Adhere to any travel restrictions announced by local government authorities.</li> <li>• Be prepared to shelter in place or evacuate if instructed to do so by local government authorities.</li> <li>• Provide volunteer services only as requested.</li> </ul>
<b>HIGH (Orange)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>High — Recommended Actions</b></li> <li>• <i>Complete recommended actions at lower level.</i></li> <li>• Be alert to suspicious activity and report it to proper authorities.</li> <li>• Review your personal disaster plan.</li> <li>• Exercise caution when traveling.</li> <li>• Have shelter in place materials on hand and review procedure in this brochure.</li> <li>• If a need is announced, donate blood at designated blood collection center.</li> <li>• Prior to volunteering, contact agency to determine their needs.</li> </ul>
<b>ELEVATED (Yellow)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Elevated — Recommended Actions</b></li> <li>• <i>Complete recommended actions at lower level.</i></li> <li>• Be alert to suspicious activity and report it to proper authorities.</li> <li>• Ensure disaster supplies kit is stocked and ready.</li> <li>• Check telephone numbers and e-mail addresses in your personal communication plan and update as necessary.</li> <li>• Develop alternate routes to/from work/school and practice them.</li> <li>• Continue to provide volunteer services.</li> </ul>
<b>GUARDED (Blue)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Guarded — Recommended Actions</b></li> <li>• <i>Complete recommended actions at lower level.</i></li> <li>• Be alert to suspicious activity and report it to proper authorities.</li> <li>• Review stored disaster supplies and replace items that are outdated.</li> <li>• Develop emergency communication plan with family/neighbors/friends.</li> <li>• Provide volunteer services and take advantage of additional volunteer training opportunities.</li> </ul>
<b>LOW (Green)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Low — Recommended Actions</b></li> <li>• Obtain copy of this brochure from your the Bioterrorism Preparedness Program, Dorchester County Health Department.</li> <li>• Develop a personal disaster plan and disaster supplies kit.</li> <li>• Examine volunteer opportunities in your community; choose an agency to volunteer with and receive initial training.</li> </ul>

Your local American Red Cross chapter has materials available to assist you in developing preparedness capabilities.