

IND: PUBLIC INFORMATION STATEMENT NO. 3

(Can be delivered within a few hours of the incident.)

There has been a nuclear explosion at _____ [site of detonation]. The fire, police and health departments are implementing their emergency-response plans. People should stay away to facilitate response efforts, and to reduce their radiation exposure from this incident. We have determined that a radionuclide was carried _____ [north, south, west or east; name neighborhoods, cities, towns, or other locations in addition to the compass direction, if possible] of the explosion site by the wind. At this point, we do not know the extent to which the winds have carried the radioactive material, so we continue to advise people to stay indoors for their own, and others, safety. If you are located within _____ miles (_____ km) _____ of _____ [explosion site], you should close the doors and windows and turn off fans that bring in air from the outside. In-room fans that only recirculate air are OK to use. Air conditioning systems that do not bring in air from the outside may be operated. This applies to a residential home, not an office building. If you were outside and saw the explosion and are not yet home, you may either continue home and shower there, or go to one of the following _____ [name the evacuation center(s) and give address(es)]. To minimize your risk of radionuclide contamination, people who were outdoors since _____ [time of the explosion] and within _____ miles [north, south, east, west] of the _____ [location of the explosion] should change clothes and place the clothes you were wearing in a plastic bag, which will likely reduce any contamination by ~80 to 90 % depending on the amount of the body covered by clothing. If possible, take a shower with warm, not hot, water and gently wash your body and hair with ordinary soap and shampoo. Children, if home, should also be given a shower or bath under supervision of a parent or other adult. Again, we recommend you stay indoors. If we determine that you would be safer in another location, we will advise you where to go. You should not go to a hospital unless you were injured in the explosion, or have a medical emergency requiring immediate treatment, such as a heart attack. Right now, the safest place for you is indoors.

You may drink or bathe in the water from your faucet. You may eat the food in your house. Food that was outdoors since _____ [time] today, within a few miles of _____ [explosion site] may need to be avoided.

We have received questions about using potassium iodide (KI) pills. KI will only reduce the radiation dose to one organ, the thyroid, and should be taken as soon as possible after being exposed, as the KI pills' effectiveness decreases rapidly. Begin taking KI within the first hour or two after the explosion, or as soon as you can. Continue taking KI until told it is OK to stop. The dose of KI varies according to size in children and age in adults, and also is different for pregnant women.

We request that people avoid using telephones, including cell phones, to ensure lines are available for emergency responders. We also request that the media not fly over the scene so that airspace is available for emergency air responders, and to reduce air movement around the scene.

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We will continue to monitor the area to establish the extent of damage and radionuclide contamination to ensure the safety of members of the general public. We will provide a follow-up message on this issue in 1 h or sooner if additional information becomes available. This follow-up message is estimated to be issued not later than _____ [e.g., give time as X:XX am/pm].

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Source: National Council on Radiation Protection and Measurements (NCRP). Responding to a Radiological or Nuclear Terrorism Incident: A Guide for Decision Makers. NCRP report no. 165. Bethesda, MD: NCRP; 2010, pp. 128-129.