

# WHAT TO DO IN A RADIATION EMERGENCY

## A GUIDE FOR BUSINESSES

[www.southampton.gov.uk](http://www.southampton.gov.uk)

### THIS BOOKLET IS IMPORTANT

Make sure you keep it in a safe place where you can find it easily.

**JULY 2021 – JULY 2024**

This booklet has been produced by Southampton City Council in cooperation with New Forest District Council and the Ministry of Defence



Ministry  
of Defence



New Forest  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



SOUTHAMPTON  
CITY COUNCIL

As Britain's premier port, nuclear powered vessels may occasionally visit Southampton.

This booklet provides essential information that you'll need in the highly unlikely event of a leak of radioactive material from a vessel. It is being distributed to all businesses within a 1.5-kilometre radius of the section of the docks where these vessels would berth in accordance with emergency regulations.

**The drill in a radiation emergency is simple:**  
**SECURE THE PREMISES**  
**GO HOME OR LEAVE THE AREA**  
**TUNE IN**

Follow instructions you are given.

Although the chance of ever having to use this booklet in an emergency is very small, please put it in a safe place where you can find it easily.

For more information on radiation safety, call the Emergency Preparedness, Resilience & Response Team at Southampton City Council on **023 8254 5080\*** or by emailing **[emergency.planning@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:emergency.planning@southampton.gov.uk)**.

This written information is available on request in other formats or languages. Please contact **023 8254 5080\*** or by emailing **[emergency.planning@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:emergency.planning@southampton.gov.uk)**.

\*Please note, this number is for non-emergency queries only. In the event of a radiation emergency please check local news and/or social media for emergency helpline numbers.

## What is a radiation emergency?

The design of nuclear-powered vessels means that an emergency involving a vessel's reactor is extremely unlikely. However, if the reactor on board a vessel suffers a serious problem and begins to leak, radioactive particles might escape into the air. There is no possibility of a "nuclear bomb" type explosion.

## Who will be affected?

If an incident occurs, it's unlikely it would affect people more than half a kilometre (500 yards) from the vessel.

Legislation requires anyone working up to 1.5km away from an operational berth to be given prior information about a nuclear emergency as provided in this booklet. The map on page 4 shows this 1.5km distance.

## What could happen in a radiation emergency?

Usually, all radioactive material would be contained in the submarine or ship. In extreme circumstances it is possible that some of this radioactive material could escape and affect areas close to the vessel or downwind of it.

The main risk to the public would be if very tiny radioactive particles were released into the air. They might be carried by the wind and could settle on people or objects that people are in contact with. These tiny particles are unstable and give off radiation.

In these circumstances you could be exposed to radioactive particles by:

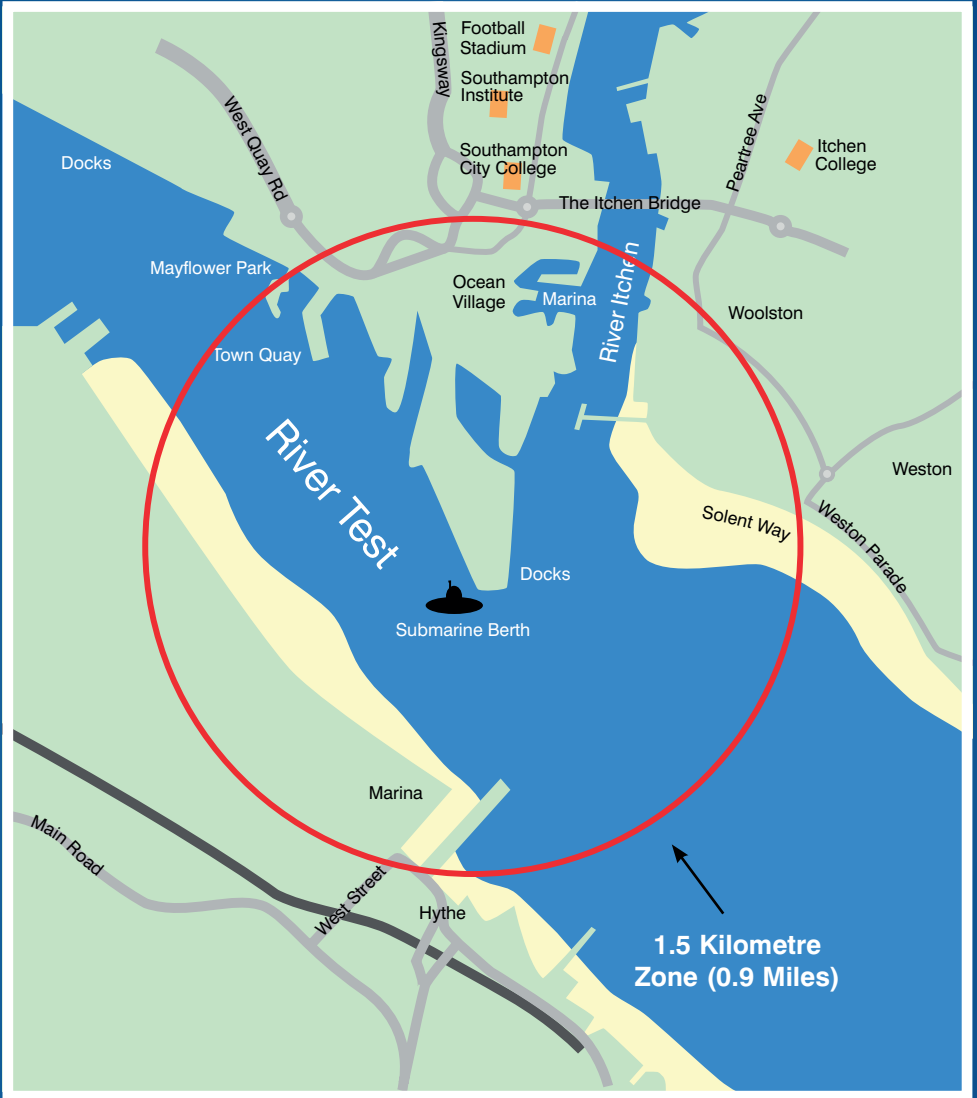
- Inhaling contaminated air or gases
- Having contact with contaminated surfaces
- Eating or drinking contaminated food or water
- Direct exposure from particles as they are blown along in a 'plume'

## Will this affect food and drink?

It is unlikely that tap water, food or drink that is covered or sealed will be affected. You should wait for advice before eating anything that is stored or growing outside. More advice and information on this will be given out as an incident progresses.

Specific food advice for establishments will be made available from the Food Standards Agency at the time of an incident - please stay tuned to local media.

## Map of the detailed Emergency Planning Zone



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We show the area as a circle to make it easier to understand.  
The actual zone goes out to the nearest natural or landscape boundary.

# IN A RADIATION EMERGENCY

## 1 SECURE YOUR PREMISES

- Ask customers to leave.
- Close all your doors and windows to reduce risk of contamination entering the building.
- Follow any normal shut down procedures for your business including sending your staff home.
- Shut down fans, fires and ventilators. In fact, anything that draws in air from outside.

## 2 GO HOME/LEAVE THE AREA

- If you do not live in the area, the best thing to do is to leave the area.
- If you live within the 1.5km area, you will also receive a resident leaflet to that address and should follow the instructions it gives.

## 3 TUNE IN

- During an emergency, up-to-date information will be published on the Southampton City Council website and social media channels. Information and advice will also be on local radio, TV and websites.
  - **TV:** BBC 1, BBC 2, ITV Meridian
  - **Radio:** BBC Radio Solent (96.1 & 103.8 FM)  
Hits Radio South Coast (107.8FM)  
Heart FM (96.7FM)  
Wave FM (105.2 FM)  
Capital FM (103.2 FM)
  - **Social Media:** Facebook.com/sotonccc  
twitter.com/SouthamptonCC
- Don't use the telephone unless you urgently need help. In an emergency the telephone system could become very busy. If you must make a call, please keep it short.

## 4 STAY TUNED

- Listen out for further announcements and information.

## What can radiation do and how do I stay safe?

Radiation is a form of energy we are exposed to all the time from natural and man-made sources. In some forms it can be harmful to humans and other living things because it can damage cells. This can result in damage to organs or other long-term effects.

In this type of incident, the main concern for the public would be exposure to radioactive iodate particles.

If you work in the area and live somewhere else, the best way to stay safe is to leave the area. If you also live in the area, you should follow the advice in the resident leaflet you receive to stay inside your home with your windows and doors shut, so none of the radioactive particles can reach you.

## How will I know about an emergency?

You will know if there is a radiation emergency because the emergency services will tell you, or you will hear or see a news announcement.

## What will residents do?

Residents receive a similar leaflet with specific advice telling them to stay in their home and explaining other precautions they should take, such as taking the stable iodine tablets they may be given. You don't need these because you will be leaving the area. If you also live in the area, please follow the advice provided in your resident leaflet.

## What happens to schools?

The following schools and nurseries are just outside the incident area:

- St John's Infant and Nursery School
- Play Away Day Centre
- YMCA Nursery Woolston
- Woolston Community Pre-school
- Hythe Primary School
- Jack & Jill Pre-school

In the event of a radiation emergency occurring, the school will look after children within their care. Even if you do not live in the area, going to collect your child may expose you and them to radiation. When it is safe for children to leave the building, the school will contact you.

Keep checking sources of information for any further details on what to do.



# IF YOU HEAR A RADIATION EMERGENCY ANNOUNCEMENT

- **Secure your premises –**  
shut the windows and doors – shut down fans, fires and ventilators.
- **Go home or leave the area**
- **Tune in –**  
to local radio or TV for information on the incident.
- **Don't use the phone unless you need urgent help.**
- **Wait for the announcement.**
- **Watch for long-term safety information in the news, on social media and in leaflets.**

## TELEPHONE HELPLINE

A helpline number will be released in the event of an emergency.

## BROADCAST INFORMATION

Information will be broadcast on:

TV: BBC1, BBC2, ITV Meridian

Radio: BBC Radio Solent (96.1 & 103.8 FM)

Hits Radio South Coast (107.8FM)

Heart FM (96.7FM)

Wave FM (105.2 FM)

Capital FM (103.2 FM)

**Social media channels:**

Facebook.com/sotoncc

twitter.com/SouthamptonCC

*If you would like more information please contact*

**Emergency Preparedness, Resilience & Response Team**

City Depot, First Avenue, Southampton, SO15 0LJ

Telephone 023 8254 5080