



## Know the risks



### **Hazardous material spills:**

A hazardous material spill, or hazmat spill, is an uncontrolled release of a substance on land, in water or in air, and can include things such as chemicals, radiation, biohazard materials, oil and gas, propane, flammable materials, industrial products and mixed waste. Sometimes hazmat spills can create a potential for fire or explosion, or pose an immediate danger to life or health.

Officials may ask you to either shelter-in-place (essentially, take immediate shelter where you are—at home, work, school, or in between. It may also mean "seal the room" – in other words, take steps to prevent outside air from coming in), or to evacuate your home and area entirely.

To prepare for a potential evacuation alert or order, it's important to develop a household plan, put together your emergency kit and connect with your neighbours. Learn about the emergency response plan for your area.

**WARNING SIGNS:** Hazmat spills typically occur without warning, as they are usually accidental, so there are no warning signs. If you see a suspicious substance or suspect a spill, call 24-hour/toll-free: 1-800-663-3456.

B.C.'s Environmental Emergency Program is responsible for responding to spills of hazardous materials and harmful substances. The program develops and implements tools to prevent, prepare for and respond to oil spills, chemical spills and spills of any substance (e.g. salt, canola oil) that could disturb or harm the natural environment.

For more information about Hazardous Material Spills, visit [Know the Risks > Hazardous Material Spills](#).

To learn about evacuation stages, visit the [Definitions You Should Know](#) page.