

# Shelter-in-Place

As a public safety precaution, a shelter-in-place notification is the most appropriate strategy if the situation is dissipating, the situation can be controlled before an evacuation would be completed, or an evacuation would expose people to more risk.

Seeking shelter during a storm is different. Shelter-in-place means selecting a small interior room, with no or few windows, and taking refuge there. You do not need to seal off your entire home, office building or school.

A shelter-in-place notification *generally* lasts no more than about 3 - 4 hours in duration, is used to keep you safer indoors rather than on the roads or outside, and separates you from a hazardous outdoor environment.

## Why Would You Need to Shelter-in-Place

Extreme weather events like high winds or tornadoes may be imminent, an active shooter may be in your neighbourhood, or hazardous materials may be released accidentally or intentionally into the environment from incidents such as explosions, commercial or industrial fires, train derailments or pipeline ruptures.

Should any such event occur, **be prepared** to keep yourself, your family and pets safe. **Stay informed** with updates from Alberta's Emergency Alert system and from emergency authorities releasing information on local television and radio stations and through the City of Edmonton's social media.

If you are notified to shelter-in-place, **follow the instructions** of local emergency authorities and in this Fact Sheet.



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## In Your Vehicle

### **PREPARE** – *what to do before a shelter-in-place notification is given*

- Create an emergency communication plan to reach each other if you're separated during a shelter-in-place notification.
- Ensure your vehicle emergency kit is adequately supplied for this type of situation with emergency radio, 2 to 4 millimetre plastic sheeting (such as heavy duty garbage bags), duct tape, scissors, first aid kit, N95 masks, as well as some ready-to-eat non-perishable foods and bottled water for every person.
  - For efficiency, cut the plastic sheeting several inches wider than the items/openings you're covering in your vehicle. Label each sheet. Put back into emergency kit so they're the right size, already labelled and ready when you need them.

### **RESPOND** – *what to do when a shelter-in-place notification is given*

When authorities provide a shelter-in-place notification, they want everyone to take those steps now. Do not attempt to go pick up other family members from home, work or any other places during a shelter-in-place order. They will need to shelter-in-place wherever they're at.

If you're driving a vehicle and hear a 'shelter-in-place' notification on the radio, then follow these steps:

- If you're VERY close to home, your office or a public building, then go there IMMEDIATELY and get inside!
  - Follow the shelter-in-place instructions for that facility.
- If you're UNABLE to get to your home, office or a public building quickly and safely, then pull over to the right-hand side of the road.
  - Stop your vehicle in the safest place possible – that still permits emergency vehicles to get through if needed.
    - If it's sunny outside, you may find it preferable to stop under a bridge or in a shady spot to avoid being overheated.
  - Turn off the engine.
  - Grab your vehicle emergency kit.
  - Close and lock all doors, windows vents. Locking may provide a tighter seal.
  - If possible, seal the heating/air conditioning vents with heavy plastic sheeting and duct tape.
  - Unless there is an imminent threat, call your emergency contact to let them know where you are and that you are safe. Identify anyone else who is with you.

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### RESPOND – *continued*

- Then, unless there's a life-threatening situation, stay off the phone lines so the equipment and networks are not overwhelmed. Leave them available for use by emergency responders.
- Stay calm. Stay informed.
  - Monitor City of Edmonton social media and local radio for updates.
  - Unless there is a life-threatening situation, do not leave your vehicle unless told to do so by emergency authorities.
  - Stay exactly where you are until you are notified that all is safe.

### RECOVER – *what to do when notified that the emergency is over*

- Follow the instructions provided by emergency authorities to avoid further hazardous contaminants.
- Open all windows and doors to get cross ventilation through your vehicle.
- Be aware that some roads may be closed or traffic detoured. Follow the directions of emergency authorities and law enforcement officials.
- Remember that your safety, mental and physical well-being are very important following an emergency.
  - Encourage your family to talk about their experience and feelings – especially children.
  - If you'd like more family assistance then contact your health care provider.

**FIND OUT MORE** - Visit the City of Edmonton website for information on personal emergency preparedness and resiliency, emergency and evacuation kits, and much more at [edmonton.ca/EmergencyManagement](http://edmonton.ca/EmergencyManagement).