

# Radiation Emergency Information for those living and working in the Outline Planning Zone of the Atomic Weapons Establishment



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## Why do I need this information?

It's unlikely that you will be asked to take immediate actions in the event of a radiation emergency at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE), but this leaflet provides information on steps that might be taken if the situation extends beyond the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ).

Information about what to do in the event of a radiation emergency at the AWE sites is provided on the West Berkshire Council to people within the Atomic Weapons Establishment Outline Planning Zone, set by the Radiation (Emergency Preparedness & Public Information) Regulations 2019.

## Does this apply to me?

This leaflet provides information for people who live, work or are in the area, beyond the Atomic Weapons Establishment Detailed Emergency Planning Zone (DEPZ) but within the Outline Planning Zone (OPZ).

[Check this interactive map to find out if you're in the OPZ.](#)

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## What is the Outline Planning Zone?

The OPZ is to assist the local authority in planning for unlikely but more severe events. Outline planning builds on the arrangements and capabilities in the detailed emergency planning zone to provide commensurate planning for low-probability events.

Protective arrangements for people in the OPZ would only be activated if it was determined the risk from the event extended beyond the area for which detailed emergency plans have been prepared. Any decision made to activate the plan for the OPZ would be based on the best information available during the event. The OPZ has been set by the Secretary of State for Defence surrounding 15km at AWE Aldermaston and 12km at AWE Burghfield.

## How will I know if there is a radiation emergency?

The emergency services will alert people to a radiation emergency at Atomic Weapons Establishment through a number of channels including, the news, TV and radio,

official emergency services social media such as Thames Valley Police, or AWEs social media, and other methods. Only the official media of the emergency services and responding agencies have the best information to keep you safe.

## I live in the Detailed Emergency Planning Zone – what do I do?

You should read the [Detailed Emergency Planning Zone leaflet](#).

## I live in the Outline Planning Zone – what do I do?

If a radiation emergency is declared at the AWE site, you do not need to take any action unless directed to do so.

In the unlikely event that plans covering OPZ's are activated, the downwind area required to take action will be notified and advised to:

### Go in

- Go indoors to the nearest safe location and stay there.
- Close windows and doors
- Shut down fans, fires and ventilators, anything that draws in air from outside to reduce contamination entering the building/shelter.

### Stay in

- Keep pets indoors to stop them bringing contamination into the house

### Tune in

- To local radio, TV or official social media to get up to date emergency information.
- Keep up to date with information on the incident issued by official sources, such as the council, government and emergency services.

### Do not:

- Do not leave the area unless you are told to do so by the emergency services. You will be much safer indoors. If you try to leave earlier you may block access for emergency services.
- Do not collect your children from school – they will be looked after there by the school and the council.
- Do not go outside where you will potentially be at risk from harmful materials.



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Every incident is different, so you may be asked to take different actions from people living in other areas of the OPZ. More information on these can be found in the West Berkshire Council's [AWE Offsite Emergency Framework](#) and in this information from the [UK Health Security Agency](#).

## Should I leave the area?

No. In the unlikely event that plans covering the OPZ's were ever activated, do not leave your home unless advised to do so by the emergency services.

After assessing the situation the emergency services will decide if evacuation is necessary. It is extremely unlikely but if a wider evacuation is necessary, the evacuated areas will be controlled and you will be told which routes to use to leave the area safely

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via local TV and radio, or by door to door visits by the emergency services. Rest Centres will be set up to accommodate and care for people unable to make their own arrangements.

If an evacuation warning is given then the following items should be packed and ready to go:

- Clothing.
- Medicines or special foods you, family members or pets might need.
- Private documents.
- If you have children – baby food, clothing, toys and books.
- If you have pets – leads, baskets/ carriers, cages and food.

Ensure fires are out, and that cookers, gas, electrical equipment and, other appliances are switched off. Lock up your house/any other buildings and leave.

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## Further Information

For further information about the Atomic Weapons Establishment emergency planning please contact West Berkshire Council:

Tel: 01635 503 535

Email: [EmergencyPlanning@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:EmergencyPlanning@westberks.gov.uk)

Website: <https://info.westberks.gov.uk/awe>

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