

What to do in a **radiation emergency**

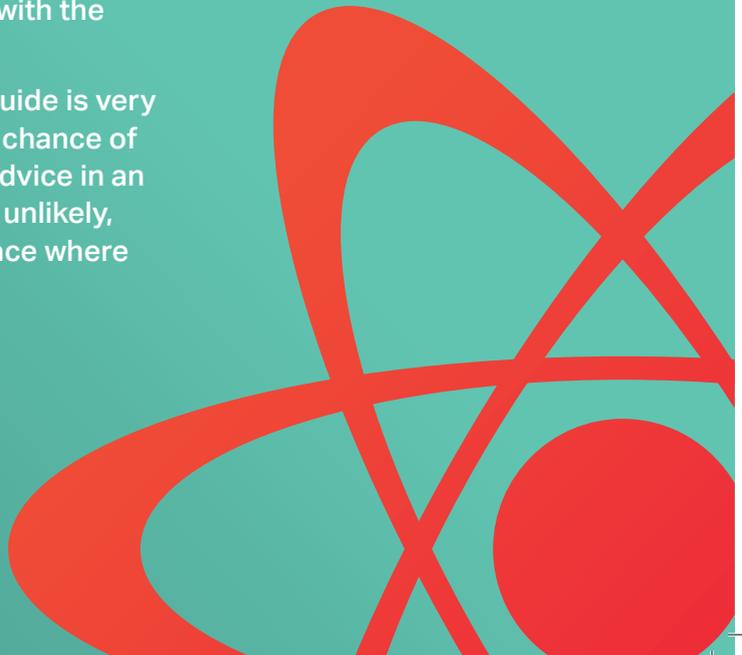
A guide for businesses

www.portsmouth.gov.uk

This guide tells you what you need to do in the extremely unlikely event of a radiation emergency at Portsmouth naval base.

It has been produced by Portsmouth City Council, Gosport Borough Council and Hampshire County Council, in consultation with the NHS and the Royal Navy.

The information in this guide is very important. Although the chance of ever having to use this advice in an emergency is extremely unlikely, please put it in a safe place where you can find it easily.



What is a radiation emergency?

The design of nuclear-powered submarines and ships means the likelihood of a radiation accident is extremely remote. There is absolutely no risk of a 'nuclear bomb'-type explosion.

Who will be affected?

If an accident happened, it probably wouldn't affect people more than half a kilometre (500 yards) from the vessel, and because of the size of the naval base this would probably only affect people within the base.

By law we provide information to everyone who lives within 1.5 kilometres (1 mile) of the nuclear berths in the naval base (see map across). Your business is in this zone.

What could happen in a radiation emergency?

Usually, all radioactive material would be contained in the submarine or ship. In some extreme

circumstances it is possible that some of this radioactive material could escape and affect areas close to the vessel or downwind of it.

In such an emergency, people in the naval base who were very close to the vessel could be exposed to gamma radiation, which is very similar to x-rays.

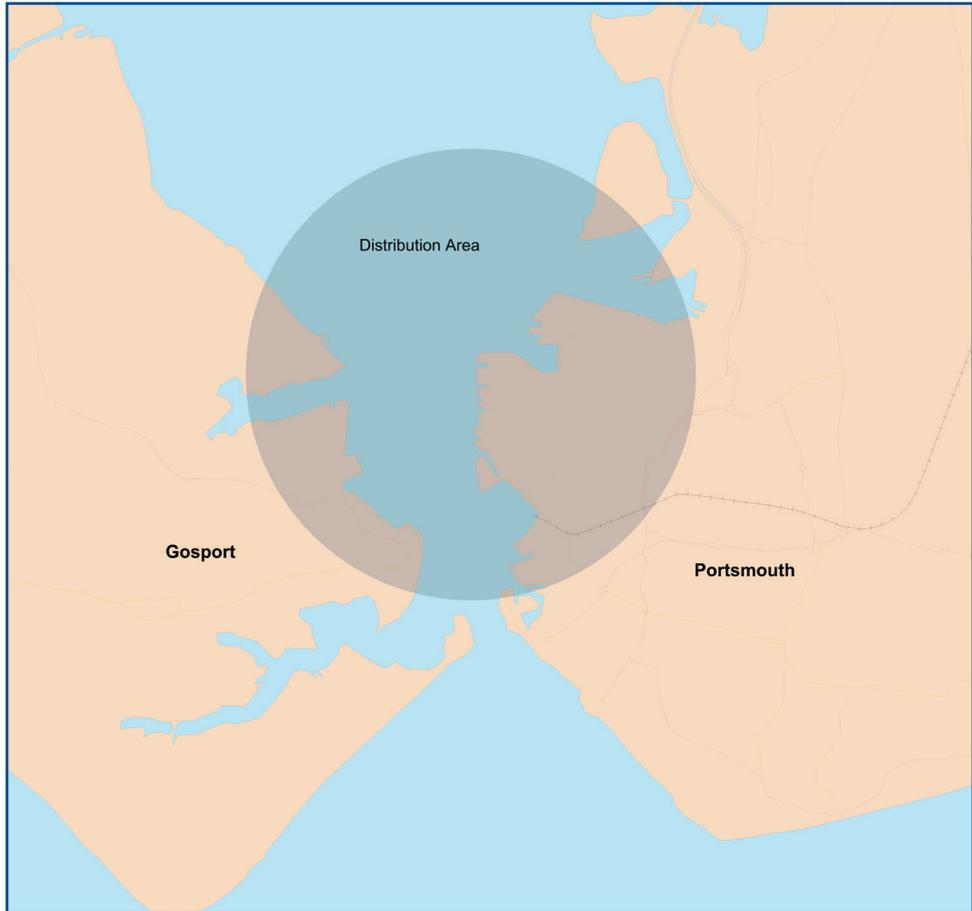
The main risk to the public would be if very tiny radioactive particles were released into the air. They might be carried by the wind and could settle on people or objects that people were in contact with. These tiny particles are unstable and give off radiation.

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'

Map of affected area

This map shows the approximate area in which this leaflet is distributed.



1. In this guide 'Portsmouth naval base' means the areas at HMS Nelson owned by the MOD and Her Majesty's Naval Base (HMNB) Portsmouth.
2. We show the affected area as a circle to make it easier to understand. The actual zone goes out to the nearest natural or landscape boundary.

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.

Your body can absorb a limited amount of iodates so we can easily keep people safe by giving them stable iodine tablets, these contain safe iodates and minimise the health risks, by preventing the body absorbing certain harmful material.

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 which to stay inside with your windows and doors shut, so none of the radioactive particles can reach you. More instruction on what to do are on the following pages.

How will I know about an emergency?

You will know if there is a radiation emergency because the police will tell you, or you will hear or see a news announcement. The naval base siren will also be used – a rising and falling wailing note. This siren is tested at 9.30am on the last Wednesday of February, June and October.

What should I do if there's an emergency?

Secure your premises, and go home or leave the area.

Secure your premises

- Ask customers to leave.
- **Close all your doors and windows** to reduce the risk of contamination entering the building.
- Follow any normal shut down procedures for your business.
- **Switch off** fans, ventilation equipment or appliances such as central heating boilers and gas fires, which draw air from outside. This will help stop any contamination entering the building.
- **Put out** or damp down open fires

Go home / leave the area

- If your home is within the 1.5km area you will also receive a resident leaflet and should follow the instructions it gives.

Tune in

- During an emergency, we will publish up-to-date information and advice on Portsmouth City Council's website www.portsmouth.gov.uk
- Information and advice will also be on local radio and TV and websites.
- **Keep listening** and watching

Local radio stations include:

- Radio Solent (96.1 FM, 999 MW)
- Heart FM (97.5 FM)
- Capital (103.2 FM)
- Wave (105.2 FM)
- The Breeze (107.4 FM)
- Sam FM (106 FM)
- Express FM (93.7 FM)

Helpline:

In a radiation emergency you can call our helpline, 0800 085 0375

Health issues:

Call NHS 111 on telephone number 111 or go to the website www.111.nhs.uk

Don't use the phone unless you urgently need help

In an emergency, mobile and landline networks might be overloaded. If you must make a call, please keep it short.

What will residents do?

Residents receive a similar leaflet with specific advice telling them to stay in their homes and explaining stable iodine tablets they may be given. You don't need these because you will be leaving the area. If you do

live in the area please follow the advice in your resident leaflet.

Will this affect food and drink?

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

Specific advice for food establishments will be available from the Food Standards Agency.

Use this space to write down anything you'll need to remember to do in this situation

What do I do when the immediate danger has passed?

You should keep listening and looking for announcements and updates on the news.

How to find out more

If you would like to find out more about the Ministry of Defence's nuclear-powered vessels, visit the Royal Navy website:
www.royalnavy.mod.uk

If you would like to find out more about the emergency plan for the area around the naval base, visit the Portsmouth City Council website at www.portsmouth.gov.uk and search 'Reactor emergency plan'.

You can get more information on radiation and the REPPiR regulations from these websites:

- Public Health England: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/public-healthengland
- Health and Safety Executive: www.hse.gov.uk

More copies of this leaflet are available by:

- Writing to:
**Emergency Preparedness,
Resilience & Response Team
Portsmouth City Council
Civic Offices
Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
PO1 2AL**
- Emailing emergency.planning@portsmouthcc.gov.uk
- Calling (023) 9268 8052

You can also read and download leaflets from our website at www.portsmouth.gov.uk by searching 'Reactor emergency plan'.



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You can get this Portsmouth City Council information in large print, Braille, audio or in another language by calling 023 9268 8052.

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