

Nuclear preparedness:

What should I do in case of a nuclear event?



Statens strålevern
Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority



Radiation and humans

People can be exposed to radiation in different ways. Radioactive substances may spread via the air and be absorbed into the body when we breathe this contaminated air. You can come in contact with radioactive substances by touching them or by ingesting food or drink that has been contaminated. Radiation from radioactivity in our surroundings also poses a risk to us. Different factors contribute in determining how dangerous radiation might be.

The amount and type of radiation, and precisely which organs in your body are exposed, determine the risk to your health. Small doses of radiation will not immediately result in any detectable injuries; however it does increase the risk of developing cancer in the future. Acute injuries of the type that are evident shortly after exposure to radiation will probably not occur in Norway, even in the event of the worst emissions conceivable from a reactor both inside or outside the Nordic region. It is only in the immediate vicinity of a large nuclear reactor or by direct contact with sources of radiation that a person is at risk of such injuries. Radiation, or the fear of radiation, can frighten and create psychological reactions in the population. Such reactions may lead to physical ailments.



How do I protect myself against radiation?

Radioactive contaminants or radiation can be quite serious. Follow the advice that the authorities disseminate via radio, TV and the Internet. If you or your surroundings are exposed to radioactive contaminants or radiation, there are a number of things you can do on your own. The Crisis Committee provides advice and issues legally binding orders on such measures.

- **Indoors:** If a great deal of radioactivity is expected in the air or on the ground, advice may be issued to the effect that it is safest to stay indoors. Doors, windows and air passages should be closed and ventilation blocked off. If you believe that you have been exposed to radioactive contaminants: change your clothes and take a shower. Leave your clothes and shoes outside if you have been outdoors.
- **Restricted areas:** Areas may be blocked off. Respect these restricted areas and avoid picking up any foreign elements in the surroundings.
- **Food:** If you are uncertain, only eat food that you have purchased in shops, because it has been checked by the authorities. Follow the advice issued by the authorities on drinking water.
- **Abroad:** If you are contemplating travelling to an area where radioactive contamination has recently occurred, the authorities (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs) will be able to give you advice on what you should do.

Nuclear preparedness in Norway

After the Chernobyl accident in 1986, a preparedness organisation was created to manage nuclear accidents and other events that may cause radioactive contamination in Norway or impact Norwegian interests in general. The organisation is comprised of authorities and experts who are tasked with limiting the harmful effects of such events. The Crisis Committee for Nuclear preparedness manages the preparedness organisation. The Crisis Committee is tasked with protecting lives, health, the environment and important societal interests. Your county governor is the regional arm of the Crisis Committee.

The Crisis Committee for Nuclear Preparedness

Members of the Crisis Committee include representatives from:

- The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority (which chairs the committee)
- The Directorate for Civil Protection and Emergency Planning
- The Directorate for Health
- The National Police Directorate
- The Norwegian Food Safety Authority
- The Norwegian Ministry of Defence



How will I receive information in case of a nuclear event?

- The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority will provide on-going information on its Web site as well as through the media: www.nrpa.no.
- The Crisis Committee will make announcements through the media and place information at: www.atomberedskap.no.
- Your county governor will be responsible for making information available to your region.
- Your local municipality will forward information and make local adjustments.
- You may also call the Radiation Protection Authority at: (+47) 67 16 25 00

The Norwegian Radiation Protection Authority
(Secretariat of the Crisis Committee)

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www.stralevernet.no

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