



## INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS – PROTECTION GUIDELINES

### General Instructions for Self - Protection from Industrial Accidents

Below are General Instructions for self-protection that should be followed in the event of an industrial accident. Please note that, in addition to the above general instructions, further site-specific information is posted by the individual operators for each site falling under the provisions of SEVESO III (SEVESO site). Such information may be found at the website of the corresponding Region.

### BE INFORMED

In the case of an industrial accident where hazardous substances are involved, the competent Authorities, following the relevant recommendation from the head of the Fire Service on site, decide on the safest measure that should be implemented, as the case may be, with the aim of protecting the life and health of the citizens, i.e.:

- stay in safe indoor areas or
- proactive/organised evacuation.

Note that in order for the head of the Fire Service on site to assess the safest measure between staying indoors or evacuating the citizens in an organised manner, different factors are considered, such as any sampling or metering results, the required time for an organised evacuation in relation to the time/space distribution of the toxic cloud concentration, the potential impact of the chemicals on humans, the vulnerability of the area surrounding the establishment etc.

### Therefore, it is important to:

- Study, become familiar with and carry out the General Instructions provided below, as well as the Seveso Site-specific self-protection Instructions posted on the website of the corresponding Region, until you receive any Special Instructions during an accident.
- In the event of an accident, **follow only the instructions given by the competent Authorities** via the mass media and social media.

***Everyone should be familiar with the following General Instructions and especially those living, passing through or frequently spending time in areas where there are:***

- ***Industrial sites handling dangerous substances (subject or not to the provisions of the Seveso-III Directive).***
- ***Transportation axes used for transporting dangerous substances.***
- ***Ice skating rinks and large industrial refrigerators.***
- ***Water treatment plants where gas chloride is used.***

## WHAT TO DO

### A. Before an industrial accident

#### Be prepared

- Study, become familiar with and carry out the Seveso Site-specific self-protection Instructions posted on the website of the corresponding Region.
- After reading these instructions, discuss the matter with everyone in your family.
- Gather the following items or make sure it is easy to gather them fast in one room:
  - Adhesive insulating tape (paper tape), to seal the door and window frame gaps (in case of a toxic cloud).
  - Scissors.
  - Plastic sheets (cut-down to size) or plastic garbage bags to cover the openings of the air-conditioning units.
  - Towels and small cloths.
  - Flashlight with batteries (the batteries should be stored next to the flashlight, otherwise they should be regularly checked), for the event of a power failure.
  - First aid kit.
  - Necessary medicines for anyone in the family.
- Other supplies that may be specifically required. Select the room of your home that offers maximum protection. Take into consideration that the room should:
  - Be at the centre of your home.
  - Have the minimum number of windows and doors, which should shut tightly.
  - Communicate with the main bathroom or half-bathroom.
  - Not have its windows on the danger side (establishment or street).
  - Not have any openings for air exchange with the environment (i.e. fireplace, air-conditioning units, ventilation openings etc.).
  - Be on the highest floor possible (most toxic gases, as they are heavier than air, move towards the lower air layers).
- Check the preselected room for leaks (if there is any air ingress) on a windy day. Permanently seal the window openings with duct tape, so the room offers a high level of protection.
- Drive cautiously around industrial establishments or vehicles transporting dangerous materials.

### B. During an industrial accident, wherever you are, follow the General Instructions below:

- Remain calm and try to calm those next to you.
- Stay or immediately move to a safe, enclosed space, and avoid movement on the streets. The aim is to protect yourself from dangerous chemicals that may enter your home, from potential explosions (primary and secondary fragments) and from thermal radiation.

- Shut any doors (inside and outside) and windows tightly. Shut down any ventilators and air-conditioning units.
- Prepare wet towels to protect yourself in the event of exposure to inhalation irritants.
- Extinguish any flames, turn-off the gas stove and do not smoke.
- **In any event, watch the media and stay connected on social media. Trust only official announcements and only follow the instructions of the competent Authorities.**
- In the event of an accident at a SEVESO-site, follow the Specific Self-protection Instructions, posted on the website of the corresponding Region.
- Wait for the competent Authorities to provide information regarding the use of tap water or drink only bottled water.
- Do not go to the scene of the accident.
- Avoid calling the Authorities or friends and relatives on the phone, unless you need immediate assistance. Unnecessary phone use keeps lines busy and prevents use in an emergency.
- Do not expose yourself or others to dangers.
- If you are inside a building away from your home, implement the emergency plan of that building.

***In particular:***

***1. If you are at home and have the time***

- Shut tightly any windows, window shutters and curtains, as well as the outside and inside doors of your home, without locking them.
- Do not go near the windows for any reason. There is a risk of injury from broken glass.
- Extinguish any flames, turn off the air-conditioning, whether part of a central system or not, and also turn off the ventilation systems, kitchen extractor, fans and any heating/cooling system.
- If you suspect a leak of flammable gases, turn off the main electrical power and natural gas switches, to prevent a potential explosion.
- Cover the air-conditioning units with plastic garbage bags.
- Do not use gas cylinders.
- Do not smoke.
- Bring your pets inside your home.
- Seal any door and window frame gaps (on all four sides) with adhesive insulating tape (paper tape) or any other available means. In addition or alternatively, you can use wet towels or blankets, plastic sheets, aluminium foil or wax paper (baking paper).
- Cover the keyhole and door handle with paper tape.
- Using paper tape and plastic sheets, tightly seal the fireplace vents, the kitchen fan, all heating systems, air inlets and ventilation systems, and all doors and windows. In addition or alternatively, you can use wet towels or blankets, aluminium foil or wax paper (baking paper).
- Do not use the elevator (it acts as a pump, drawing air to the inside of the building).
- Go to your preselected room.

- If, despite your efforts, dangerous gases enter the building, fold a wet towel or cloth several times over, cover your mouth and nose, and take short breaths in order to filter the air you are inhaling. Alternatively, use the shower.
- Let your neighbours know about the danger.
- **Watch the media and stay connected on social media. Trust only official announcements and only follow the instructions of the competent Authorities.**

### **Dangers from staying at home**

- In the event of an industrial accident where toxic gases are released, shutting all doors (inside and outside) achieves a high degree of protection, provided that the chemically polluted air is kept out of the home. Any polluted air entering the home can have very serious consequences on human health. Given that for many chemicals the lethal dose is extremely low, it follows that even brief exposure to a chemical substance can cause irreparable health damage. Therefore, it is extremely important to properly seal off any door and window frame gaps. Moreover, all of the above must be done as soon as possible, without letting valuable time go to waste.
- However, as soon as the danger is over, it is just as important to quickly and properly air your home, to clear it from all the air that was polluted with toxic substances.

### ***II. If you are in your car***

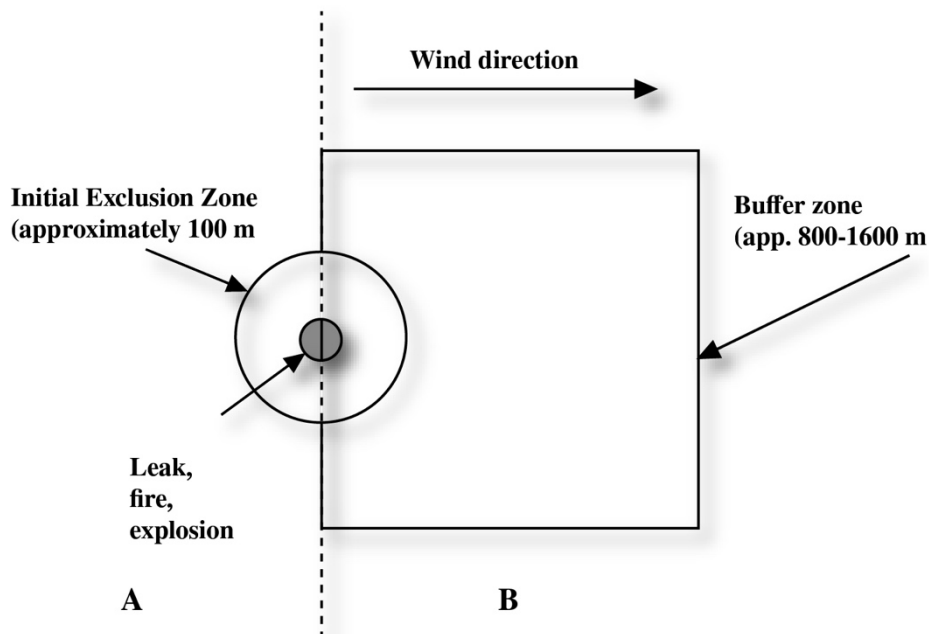
- Close your windows and keep them shut, turn off the air-conditioning and ventilation system and close any air vents. This way, you get some short-term protection.
- In case you can leave the area, stay inside your car and drive carefully.
- In case you cannot leave the area and there is a safe building nearby, park your car at a spot where it does not obstruct traffic and enter the building. If there is no safe building nearby, remain calm and stay in your car.
- **Watch the media and stay connected on social media. Trust only official announcements and only follow the instructions of the competent Authorities.**

### ***III. If you are away from a safe building and near the accident site***

- Leave the accident site as soon as possible.

If you are...

- Down-wind of the accident (area B in the following drawing), leave moving vertically to the wind direction or water flow.
- Up-wind of the accident (area A in the following drawing), leave moving against the wind direction or water flow.



- As a general rule, move to higher ground, since many toxic substances are heavier than air.
- Do not walk on and do not unnecessarily touch surfaces where the leaked substance is on.
- Do not smoke.
- Cover up your body as much as possible.
- Filter the air you are breathing from dangerous gasses, dust or droplets, by covering your mouth and nose with a folded towel or cloth or a mask, and taking short breaths.
- **Watch the media and stay connected on social media. Trust only official announcements and only follow the instructions of the competent Authorities.**

**IV. If you see an accident and after moving to a safe distance**

- Call the Fire Service at **199**.
- Give precise details (location, distance from the accident site, name, contact number, etc.) and describe the incident.
- Note:
  - If there are any victims and make an estimate as to the number of people involved (number of fatalities, injuries) and the symptoms they have (e.g. dizziness, headache, eye irritation etc.)
  - The colour of the smoke or leaking liquid.
  - The smells and strange noises, if there are any.
  - The behaviour of the cloud, if there is one (direction of movement, downwards or upwards, etc.) or the behaviour of the liquid.
  - If there is any information/markings on the packaging, containers (barrels, cans and pallets) or tanker vehicle (company name etc.) (in the case of an accident involving a tanker vehicle).

## In case of an accident involving a tanker vehicle transporting hazardous substances

### Pay special notice

- If there are any orange-colour signs (warning signs identifying the shipment materials), note the two numbers (one two/three-digit and one four-digit number), the so-called UN numbers, e.g.

33
1114

- If there are any diamond-shaped hazards labels with colours (red, yellow, blue, etc.), illustrations (bomb explosion, black or white flame, skull and bones, etc.) and numbers on the bottom corner (1.1., 3, 4 etc.). See below examples:



- What is near the accident site (facilities, buildings, schools, day-care centres, senior citizen centre, mass transport stop/station, squares, rivers, lakes, drains, etc.).
- Do not go off the phone unless told so by the operator – they may require additional information.

## ***V. If you are exposed to a chemical***

- Call for medical assistance immediately.  
**National Emergency Centre (EKAV) 166**  
**Poison Control Centre: (+30) 210 7793777**

## **C. After the accident**

- Only follow the instructions of the competent Authorities.
- Act quickly if you have come into contact with or have been exposed to dangerous substances.
- Immediately seek medical assistance if you are experiencing unusual symptoms.
- In the event you have not left the area you were at, stay there until the competent Authorities instruct you to return to your home.
- After being informed that the accident has ended and it is safe to return to your home:
  - Properly air all rooms.
  - For the next 1-2 days, leave your shoes outside when entering your home.
  - Clean all the home furnishings and fixtures (doors, windows, rugs, floors), as well as the outdoor areas (balconies, stairs, terraces).
  - Take daily showers, thoroughly washing your hands, hair and facial hair.
  - Do not eat local fruits and vegetables. Instead, opt for packaged foods from other areas.
  - Once the competent Authorities inform you it is safe to eat local fruits and vegetables, do so following their instructions (e.g. wash well before eating).
  - The competent Authorities, if necessary, will also issue a free-range farming prohibition to animal farmers.
  - Moreover, the competent Authorities will inform you regarding the suitability of consuming animal and fishing products.
  - Wait for the competent Authorities to provide information regarding the use of tap water.
  - Wait for the competent Authorities to provide information regarding the suitability of the local beaches for swimming.
  - Make sure small children are not putting objects that may have been polluted by toxic substances in their mouths.
  - Report the presence of vapours or other dangerous substances to your local Fire Service.

## **SEVESO site-specific information**

SEVESO sites are licensed on a case-by-case basis by the Ministry of Environment & Energy and the Development Directorates of the corresponding Regions [which, according to the provisions of Art. 100 of Law 4605/2019 (Government Gazette Issue 25/A/01-04-2019) are responsible since 01-04-2019 to grant licenses to medical gas and compressed gas production and/or bottling plants, formerly under the competence of the General Secretariat for Industry (Ministry of Development & Investments)]. Sites are divided into upper and lower tier establishments, depending on the amount of hazardous substances they possess.

More specific information for all establishments subject to the provisions of the SEVESO-III Directive (SEVESO sites) is provided by their individual operators to:

- the Independent Directorate of Civil Protection of the corresponding Region, following a relevant request of the latter to the competent licensing authority for upper-tier establishments, and
- the local competent Fire Service and/or the Directorate for Natural Disasters Planning of the General Secretariat for Civil Protection, following a relevant request of the latter to the competent licensing authority for lower-tier establishments.

In the context of this communication, the following are provided:

- Information regarding the basic safety instructions that citizens should follow in the event of an accident on the establishment.
- A description of the nature of risks concerning large-scale accident risks inside the establishment and their potential impact on public health.

