

2021/2022 Emergency Preparedness Information

An important message from the Beaver County Emergency Management Agency

Residents of Beaver County
Keep this information in a handy place for ready reference

RESPONSE REQUESTED

DO NOT DISCARD



An important message
from the Beaver County
**Emergency
Management
Agency**



November 2021

DEAR BEAVER COUNTY RESIDENTS:

This brochure contains important information for residents living or working within the 10-Mile Emergency Planning Zone for Beaver Valley Power Station as well as information on emergency alerts. **Please keep this information handy for reference** as it contains information you will need in the unlikely event of an emergency at the Beaver Valley Power Station. Should an emergency occur, you need to be prepared.

If an emergency occurs at Beaver Valley Power Station there could be a release of radiation. Exposure to radiation can be harmful to your health. If a serious accident occurs, you might need to leave the area or take shelter. Response plans are explained in this brochure.

Beaver County Emergency Services is providing this information because it is important to you and your family in the event of an emergency. We ask that you read it all and talk it over with members of your family. Information that is included is:

- What you should do if you hear the emergency sirens in your area.
- What you should do if you are asked to “Shelter In Place.”
- What you should do if you are asked to “Evacuate.”

Remember the best way to stay safe in an emergency is to know what to do. Stay calm and help each other. Emergency workers will help after a disaster strikes, but they will not be able to reach everyone right away.

Beaver County has implemented a mass notification system to alert our residents. Please review the information on the following page to see how to receive emergency notifications at your home and on your mobile devices.

Enclosed with this brochure are information cards which are important in helping us successfully assist you should an emergency occur. One is for our farmers and the other is for those who would need special help during an evacuation because of access and functional needs. **Every year, you should fill out this card if it applies to you and return it to us. This information will be kept on file at the Beaver County Emergency Services Center. We request that residents submit a new card every year.**

We will mail the enclosed cards on an annual basis, and this information will be kept confidential. To keep our database current, these cards must be submitted annually.

If you wish, complete and sign the card, turn the completed portion of the card to the inside, and tape the card shut. The card has pre-paid postage and will not require a stamp prior to mailing. You may also print these cards online at www.beavercountypa.gov.

Emergency information is available on your county emergency management website, beavercountypa.gov. If you would like additional copies of this information please call our office at 724-775-1700.

We can't control natural disasters, emergencies, or terrorist attacks, but we can be ready for them and know what to do to take care of ourselves and our loved ones.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Eric Brewer'.

Eric Brewer
Director
Beaver County Emergency Services

Beaver County Alerts Information

BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY ALERTS

In an effort to provide more reliable and effective communications with citizens, Beaver County has implemented an emergency notification system.

The emergency notification system is designed to make phone calls to specific people or areas in the event of an emergency. Beaver County Emergency Management will use this system to notify citizens by phone, text message and email of emergency information. The system can make thousands of calls in a minute to convey vital information. These messages may include information on nuclear power plant accidents, floods, fires, water emergencies, road closures, missing persons, evacuation orders, and weather emergencies.

The emergency notification system's citizen contact information has been provided by a third party provider and only includes publicly available phone numbers in Beaver County. It is important for residents and business owners to provide contact information such as unlisted, unpublished or cell phone numbers. Accurate contact information in the database helps to ensure emergency information will be passed on to everyone in a timely manner. Your private information will not be provided to any outside agencies or companies.

TO SIGN UP FOR BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY ALERTS

Go to: www.beavercountypa.gov and look for the Beaver County Emergency Alerts link.

When Radiological Emergency Sirens Sound

If there is significant information that could affect your safety, or if protective actions are required to protect your health and safety, the standard “Alert Signal” will be sounded over the siren system that has been installed within an approximate 10-mile radius of Beaver Valley Power Station. This signal is a steady three-minute signal. If the Alert Signal is sounded in your community, tune your radio or TV to one of the below listed County Emergency Alert Stations. A message will be broadcast advising you what action should be taken. Municipal police and firefighters may conduct neighborhood notification using mobile public address systems or door-to-door notification as a supplement to the siren system. Sirens are tested annually. This test is advertised to the public in advance.

The siren system was modified in 2021. For more information, visit: <https://energyharbor.com/en/powering-the-grid/energy-harbor-generation/beaver-valley-power-station-outdoor-warning-sirens>

BEAVER COUNTY EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEMS (EAS)

If you hear a siren, turn on a local radio or TV Emergency Alert System (EAS) station:

- AM 1230 - WBVP
- AM 1020 – KDKA
- AM 1460 – WMBA
- Channel 11 - WPXI
- Channel 4 - WTAE
- Channel 2 - KDKA

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE NOTIFIED OF AN EMERGENCY

- **Stay calm.** Turn on your radio or television to an Emergency Alert System station for information and directions.
- **Stay off the telephone.** The lines may be needed for official business. Your call could keep other people from getting emergency help.
- You may not be asked to do anything.
- EAS instructions will tell you the protective actions to be taken. The protective action could be Shelter-In-Place or Evacuate. Depending on the particular circumstances of the emergency, either protective action, or a combination, may be appropriate.

PUBLIC HOTLINE NUMBER

A public information hotline will be open during an emergency. This line is only active when the agency Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is activated. It will have current information.

BEAVER COUNTY..... (724) 773-6767

Dial 911 for Emergencies Only, use the Public Information number above to obtain information.

NOTES

Emergency Information

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'M TOLD TO SHELTER-IN-PLACE?

- Go indoors and stay there. Shelter pets.
- Listen to your local Emergency Alert System radio or television station for emergency information.
- Close all doors, windows and vents. Turn off all fans, air conditioners or other source of outside air.
- You might need to warn a friend or family member. If so, limit time spent outdoors. While outdoors, cover your mouth and nose with a damp cloth or towel. When returning indoors, leave outer clothing outside. Wash your face and hands with mild soap and lukewarm water.
- If necessary, children in schools in the affected area will be sheltered there. Parents should not try to pick up school children unless advised to do so.
- Use the telephone only if necessary.
- Do not pick produce or fruit. Food, produce, and packaged food already in your home are safe to eat.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I'M TOLD TO EVACUATE THE AREA?

- Listen for instructions on a local Emergency Alert System station.
- Prepare your home for a three-day absence; turn off all small appliances, faucets and lights. Turn down the furnace, if it is on. Be sure all air conditioners and fans are off. Lock windows and doors.
- Gather people in your home. Do not try and pick up children or relatives in schools, hospitals or nursing homes. These facilities have their own emergency procedures. If you have children in private pre-schools or daycare centers, be aware of their emergency procedures in advance.
- Pack necessities (i.e., needed medications, baby food and formula, credit cards, checkbook, cash, important papers, two changes of clothes per person, an extra pair of shoes per person, two blankets or a sleeping bag per person, toiletries, eyeglasses or contacts, battery-powered radios, batteries, flashlight and first aid kit).
- Leave if evacuation is advised for your area. Use one car per family. Close all car windows and vents. Listen to Emergency Alert System stations and proceed to a place more than 10 miles away from BVPS. You may want to stay at a reception center listed in this brochure.
- Law enforcement officials will control traffic and maintain security in evacuated areas.
- If you do not drive, get a ride from a friend or neighbor. Or go to a pick-up point listed in this brochure and a ride will be provided for you.
- Pre-planning for emergencies is important, visit ready.gov for information on how to prepare for evacuations.
- **If you have livestock.** Leave your livestock on the farm. Put them in a barn or other shelter, and leave them with stored feed and protected water. Arrangements for access to feed and water for your livestock will be coordinated by your county emergency management agency or department of emergency services. Federal and state agencies will do follow-up surveys on farm products to check for contamination.
- **Farmers and Food Producers/Distributors:** For information about what you need to know about nuclear power plant incidents go to beavercountypa.gov and click on Emergency.

WHAT ABOUT PETS AND SERVICE ANIMALS?

Pets. You may not take your pets with you to a care center. Plan now for your pet's care in any emergency. It is recommended that you make prior arrangements with friends, relatives, or pet boarding facilities. If you need more information, call your county emergency management agency or department of emergency services.

Service Animals. You may take your Service Animal with you to a care center. It is recommended that you pack supplies in advance to care for your Service Animal. If you need more information, call your county emergency management agency or department of emergency services.

Relocation of School Children 2021/2022 School Year

In some emergencies it may be necessary to relocate school children. Children will be cared for at host schools until parents come for them. Do not pick-up your child from the school they attend. Complete information is available from your school district.

SCHOOL DISTRICT	HOST SCHOOL
ALIQUIPPA SCHOOL DISTRICT	Independence Middle School 2807 Bethel Church Road Bethel Park, PA 15102
AMBRIDGE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT*	South Heights students will remain in designated school area until picked up by parent/guardian.
BEAVER AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT	Slippery Rock High School 201 Kiester Road Slippery Rock, PA 16057
BLACKHAWK SCHOOL DISTRICT	Blackhawk High School 500 Blackhawk Rd Beaver Falls, PA 15010
CENTRAL VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT - Includes Beaver County Career and Technology Center	Canon-McMillan High School 314 Elm Street Canonsburg, PA 15317
HOPEWELL AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT	South Park High School 2005 Eagle Ridge Road South Park Twp, PA 15129
MIDLAND BOROUGH SCHOOL DISTRICT - Includes Lincoln Park Performing Arts Charter School	Union Area High School 2106 Camden Avenue New Castle, PA 16101
NEW BRIGHTON AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT*	Fallston students will remain in designated school area until picked up by parent/guardian.
SOUTHSIDE AREA SCHOOL DISTRICT	Canon-McMillan high School 314 Elm Street Canonsburg, PA 15317
WESTERN BEAVER SCHOOL DISTRICT	Union Area High School 2106 Camden Avenue New Castle, PA 16101

*Schools located outside of the Plume Exposure Pathway EPZ, however some students reside in the EPZ.

Recommended Routes During an Evacuation

Evacuation routes are controlled by police for efficient movement out of your area. Once outside the 10-mile Emergency Planning Zone, use appropriate routes to your destination. If you need a temporary place to stay, continue on the designated route to your identified Reception Center. At the Reception Center you will be given directions to a Red Cross Mass Care Center nearby.

This list only includes the Municipalities that are within the Beaver Valley Power Station 10-Mile Emergency Planning Zone.

MUNICIPALITY	RECOMMENDED ROUTES	RECEPTION CENTER
ALIQUIPPA CITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I-376 east to Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. 2. Rt. 51 (Constitution Blvd.) south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. 	South Park Fairgrounds
BEAVER BOROUGH	PA 51 north to I-376 west to I-76 (PA Turnpike East) to I-79 north to Slippery Rock.	Slippery Rock University
BRIDGEWATER BOROUGH	PA 51 north to I-376 west to I-76 (PA Turnpike East) to I-79 north to Slippery Rock.	Slippery Rock University
BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP	I-376 west to I-76 (PA Turnpike East) to I-79 north to Slippery Rock.	Slippery Rock University
CENTER TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I-376 East to I-79 South to Washington County Fairgrounds. 2. Monaca-East Rochester Bridge to Rte. 65 south to I-79 south to Washington County Fairgrounds. 	Washington County Fairgrounds
CHIPPEWA TOWNSHIP	PA 51 to I-376 west to Rt. 108 Exit, west on Rt. 108 to Rts. 317 W/551 N, Rt. 317 west to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School
FALLSTON BOROUGH	I-376 west to I-76 (PA Turnpike East) to I-79 north to Slippery Rock.	Slippery Rock University
FRANKFORT SPRINGS BOROUGH	South on Rt. 18 to Washington County Fairgrounds.	Washington County Fairgrounds
GEORGETOWN BOROUGH	South on Rt. 168 to Rt. 18 to Washington County Fairgrounds.	Washington County Fairgrounds
GLASGOW BOROUGH	Rt. 168 north to I-376 west to Rt. 108 exit. Rt. 108 west to 317 W/551 N, Rt. 317 west to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School

Recommended Routes During an Evacuation continued on next page.

Recommended Routes During an Evacuation (continued)

MUNICIPALITY	RECOMMENDED ROUTES	RECEPTION CENTER
GREENE TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. East on Rt. 30 to I-79, south on I-79 to Washington County Fairgrounds. 2. South on Rt. 168 to Rt. 18 south to Washington County Fairground. 	Washington County Fairgrounds
HANOVER TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. East on Rt. 30 to I-79, south on I-79 to Washington County Fairgrounds. 2. South on Rt. 18 to Washington County Fairgrounds. 	Washington County Fairgrounds
HOOKSTOWN BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. East on Rt. 30 to I-79, south on I-79 to Washington County Fairgrounds. 2. South on Rt. 168 to Rt. 18 south to Washington County Fairgrounds. 	Washington County Fairgrounds
HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. South on Brodhead Road to Flaugherty Run Road to I-376 east to Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. 2. East on I-376 to Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. 	South Park Fairgrounds
INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. East on Rt. 151 to I-376 east to Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. 2. East on Rt. 30 to I-376 east to Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. 	South Park Fairgrounds
INDUSTRY BOROUGH	Tusca Rd. west to Rt. 168, Rt. 168 north to I-376 west to Rt. 108 exit, west on 108 to 317 W/551 N to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School
MIDLAND BOROUGH	North on Rt. 168 to I-376 west to Exit Rt. 108, Rt. 108 west to Rts. 317 W/551 N, Rt. 317 west to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School
MONACA BOROUGH	Monaca-East Rochester Bridge to Rt. 65 south to I-79, I-79 to Washington County.	Washington County Fairgrounds
OHIOVILLE BOROUGH	North on Rt. 168 to I-376, west on I-376 to Rt. 108 exit, west on Rt. 108 to Rt. 317 W/551 N, Rt. 317 west to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School

Recommended Routes During an Evacuation (continued)

MUNICIPALITY	RECOMMENDED ROUTES	RECEPTION CENTER
PATTERSON HEIGHTS BOROUGH	Darlington Road to 8th St. Hill to Rt. 51, north on Rt. 51 to I-376, west on I-376 to Rt. 108 exit, west on Rt. 108 to Rts. 317 W/551 N, Rt. 317 west to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School
PATTERSON TOWNSHIP	Darlington Road to 8th St. Hill to Rt. 51, north on Rt. 51 to I-376, west on I-376 to Rt. 108 exit, west on Rt. 108 to Rts. 317 W/551 N, Rt. 317 west to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School
POTTER TOWNSHIP	I-376 east to I-79 south to Washington County Fairgrounds.	Washington County Fairgrounds
RACCOON TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> East on Green Garden Road, to I-376 east to Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. North on Rt. 18 to I-376 east to Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp. 	South Park Fairgrounds
SHIPPINGPORT BOROUGH	South on Rt. 18 to Washington County Fairgrounds.	Washington County Fairgrounds
SOUTH BEAVER TOWNSHIP	Rt. 168 north to I-376 west to exit Rt. 108, Rt. 108 west to Rts. 317 W/551 N, Rt. 317 west to Mohawk High School.	Mohawk High School
SOUTH HEIGHTS BOROUGH	Rt. 51 south to Rt. 88 south to South Park Twp.	South Park Fairgrounds
VANPORT TOWNSHIP	I-376 west to I-76 (PA Turnpike East) to I-79 north to Slippery Rock.	Slippery Rock University

RECEPTION CENTERS

A Reception Center is a location where you first go to register and receive general information including assistance in contacting others and directions to a care center. The following places become reception centers in the event of evacuation. Other centers will be opened if necessary. Their locations will be announced on local radio or television stations.

- South Park Fairgrounds, 1888 Brownsville Rd., South Park Twp, Allegheny County, PA 15129
- Slippery Rock University, 1 Morrow Way, Slippery Rock, Butler County, PA 16057
- Washington County Fairgrounds, 2151 North Main Street, Washington, Washington County, PA 15301
- Mohawk High School, 385 Mohawk School Road, Bessemer, Lawrence County, PA, 16102

Pick-up Points for Persons in Need of Transportation

PICK-UP POINTS

If you need a ride during an evacuation, go to one of these pick-up points. You will be picked up there.

ALIQUIPPA CITY	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Parking lot beside Dunkin' Donuts, Brodhead Road2. Aliquippa Elementary School, 21st Street3. Aliquippa Shopping Center, Brodhead and Mill4. West Aliquippa, Main & 3rd
BEAVER BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Trinity Lutheran Church, 3rd Street2. SS Peter & Paul Church3. First Presbyterian Church4. College Square School5. King Beaver Apartments6. Beaver Fire Department – Market Street
BRIDGEWATER BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Bridge & Market Street2. Union Building and Loan, Leopard Lane3. Bruster's Ice Cream, Riverside Drive4. Bert's Wooden Indian, Leopard Lane
BRIGHTON TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fire Station #1, 1120 Dutch Ridge Road2. Fire Station #2, 2295 Tuscarawas Road3. Fire Station #3, Dutch Ridge Road at Grange
CENTER TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. #1 Fire Company, Brodhead Road and Main Street2. Main Entrance, Beaver Valley Mall
CHIPPEWA TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Municipal Building, Darlington Road2. Methodist Church, Darlington Road3. Saint Monica Catholic Church, Darlington Road4. Camp Baker, (if in season), Anchortown Road
FALLSTON BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Fallston Borough Building, 90 Beaver Street2. Brady's Run Grill, Rt. 51
FRANKFORT SPRINGS BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Frankfort Springs Borough Building, Rt. 18
GEORGETOWN BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hookstown Volunteer Fire Station #2, 330 3rd St., Georgetown
GLASGOW BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Smith's Ferry Methodist Church
GREENE TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hookstown Grange Hall, Rt. 168, Greene Township
HANOVER TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hanover Township Fire Department, Rt. 1682. Hanover Fire Department, Rt. 18
HOOKSTOWN BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hookstown Free Methodist Church

Pick-up Points for Persons in Need of Transportation

HOPEWELL TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Green Garden Shopping Center, Green Garden Road2. Crestmont Shopping Center, Brodhead Road3. Hopewell Shopping Center, Brodhead Road4. Fire Department #1 on McKinley Road5. Fire Department #2 on Gringo Road6. Sunoco A-Plus at 5 Points, Broadhead Road
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INDEPENDENCE TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Municipal Building, Rt. 151
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INDUSTRY BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The Willows on Rt. 682. Municipal Authority, Engle Road at Willowbrook
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MIDLAND BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Lincoln Park School2. Presentation Church, Regan Hall3. Senior Citizen Building4. Midland Heights Community Building
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MONACA BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Monacatootha Apartments2. St. John's Church3. Former 4th Ward School4. Central Valley Middle School5. AC Edgecombe Apartments
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OHIOVILLE BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Four-Mile U.P. Church, 6440 Tuscarawas Road2. Borough Building, R.D. 1, Industry3. New Salem Presbyterian Church, Salem Church Road4. Ohioville Fire Department, Salem Church Road
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PATTERSON HEIGHTS BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Patterson Heights Fire Department, 600 7th Avenue
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PATTERSON TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Franciscan Manor, Darlington Road2. Riverview United Methodist Church, Darlington Road
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POTTER TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Potter Twp., Municipal Building, 206 Mowry Road
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RACCOON TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Raccoon Township Municipal Building, Rt. 182. Raccoon Township Firehall, Patterson Road
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SHIPPINGPORT BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Shippingport Community Building, Rt. 3016
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SOUTH BEAVER TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. South Beaver Fire Department, Rt. 168
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SOUTH HEIGHTS BOROUGH	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. South Heights Fire Hall, Jordan Street2. Intersection of Crawford and Highland Avenues3. Intersection of Hill Road and Gibson Avenue
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VANPORT TOWNSHIP	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tamaqui Village Social Hall2. Van Buren Social Hall3. Vanport Presbyterian Church4. I.B.E.W. Building, Sassafra Lane
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Emergency Classifications

There are Four Emergency Classification Levels at Nuclear Plants.

1. UNUSUAL EVENT

The least serious, this refers to a small problem that poses no danger to the public, such as a decrease in plant safety or potential security event. No radiation leak is expected; you do not have to do anything. Federal, state, and county officials will be told right away.

2. ALERT

During this minor problem, the plant could experience decreases in safety or a security event. Preparations are made to handle potentially more serious emergencies. Small amounts of radiation could leak inside the plant, but there is no danger to the public and you should not have to do anything. Federal, state, and county officials will be told right away and will begin emergency preparedness actions.

3. SITE AREA EMERGENCY

This is a more serious problem, such as plant equipment needed for safe operations is affected or a security event occurs. Radiation releases are not expected to exceed federal limits beyond the plant boundaries. If you hear the sirens, listen to a radio or TV station that broadcasts Emergency Alert System messages and carefully follow instructions. Federal, state, and county officials will be told right away and will act to ensure public safety.

4. GENERAL EMERGENCY

This is the most serious problem. Events are in process or have happened that may involve possible problems with plant equipment or security. These events may affect safe plant operations. Radiation could be released outside plant boundaries. Federal, state, and county officials will work with plant officials. You may have to protect yourself as described in this brochure. When the sirens sound, listen to one of the Emergency Alert System radio or TV stations for instructions and carefully follow them. If necessary, people in some areas will be advised to seek shelter or evacuate.

WHAT IS POTASSIUM IODIDE (KI)?

The use of potassium iodide (KI) is an additional protective action. State and local officials will announce when the public should take KI in Emergency Alert System messages. KI is a nonprescription medication that blocks the uptake of radioactive iodine by the thyroid gland. KI does not protect a person or the thyroid from direct exposure to radiation. Taking KI only saturates the thyroid with nonradioactive iodine.

For most individuals, taking KI is safe; however, adverse reactions are possible in persons having existing thyroid conditions and those with an allergy to iodine. Consult your physician if you have concerns about the safety of KI for your child or yourself.

KI should be taken during an emergency ONLY if recommended by government officials. KI is most effective if taken within 3-4 hours of exposure.

Residents living within the 10-mile radius, who have not already done so, may obtain more information about KI by contacting:

Pennsylvania Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH or www.health.pa.gov.

Residents can acquire KI at the Dept. of Health at 500 Market St. Suite 104 Bridgewater.

Nuclear Energy FAQs

HOW IS NUCLEAR ENERGY MADE?

A nuclear energy plant is much like a power plant that burns coal or oil. The difference is the source of heat. At the Beaver Valley Power Station, heat comes from uranium instead of coal or oil. Uranium atoms are split to produce heat. The heat is used to turn water into steam. The steam runs a turbine generator to make electricity. When uranium atoms are split, radiation is produced. Normally, a nuclear power plant releases very small amounts of radiation as a gas. At most, this will add only one or two millirem to the normal dose received by people who live near the plant. This radiation is less than the limit set by the law. No radiation is released from cooling towers.

WHAT IS RADIATION?

Radiation has been part of our natural environment since the Earth was formed. The planet is bathed in cosmic radiation from outer space, and radioactive materials naturally present in the soil, rocks, air and seawater also emit this type of energy. From the very beginnings of human civilization, radiation has been part of everyday life.

SOURCES OF RADIATION

We are exposed to small amounts of radiation every day. It is in the air we breathe, the food we eat, even inside our own bodies. It is normal to be exposed to small amounts of radiation, but to be safe you should limit the amount. Radiation doses to people are measured in millirem. The average American receives over 300 millirem of radiation per year from nature – medical procedures, such as CT scans, add about the same amount of radiation dose.

HOW IS RADIATION CONTROLLED?

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission are the principal federal agencies responsible for establishing radiation protection regulations. EPA establishes standards to protect the general environment. The NRC prescribes and enforces limits on the amount of radiation that workers and members of the public can receive from commercial use of radioactive materials.

Radiation safety is based on time, distance and shielding. The less time spent near a source, the less radiation received. The greater the distance from a source, the less radiation received. Shielding also plays a vital role. For example, dentists place a lead blanket on patients receiving X-rays. Used nuclear power plant fuel is stored underwater or in steel-lined concrete containers to protect people from penetrating radiation such as gamma rays.

Although scientists have found no adverse health effects from doses lower than 10,000 millirem, radiation experts recommend keeping doses from man-made sources as low as reasonably achievable.