

# IMPROVISED NUCLEAR DEVICES

An improvised nuclear device (IND) is an explosive nuclear weapon. It can be made from stolen nuclear material to produce a nuclear explosion. While not as powerful as Cold War-era nuclear weapons, improvised nuclear devices can cause significant injury and damage.

## WHAT HAPPENS DURING A NUCLEAR EXPLOSION?

- A nuclear explosion involves a blast that produces **intense waves of light, heat, and air**.
- Anything immediately near the blast will be destroyed.
- Dust and debris will be pulled upward to form a “mushroom” cloud above the explosion. When it falls, the dust and debris is called **“fallout”** and contains radioactive material. Radioactive fallout can be carried long distances by wind.
- A **light flash** will be visible for 10 miles or more. This flash can cause permanent or temporary blindness for several seconds to minutes.
- **High velocity winds** will follow the flash, causing buildings to collapse and injury from flying dust and debris.
- **Electrical and magnetic impulses** could damage electrical circuits and power systems.

## HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF AND OTHERS?

### IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE BLAST

- Do not try to leave the area. If in a car, seek shelter in a brick or concrete building.
- Stay indoors for at least 12 hours.
- Seek an interior room on the lowest level.
- Seal the shelter from outside wind and air.
- Turn off fans, air conditioner, heater.
- Close fireplace damper.
- Cover your nose and mouth with a cloth.
- Eat or drink only sealed food/water.
- Do not eat local fresh food or drink water from open water supplies until authorities say it is safe.
- Listen for official instructions on emergency broadcasts.
- If needed, apply first aid. Clean wounds.

### IF EXPOSED TO FALLOUT

- Do not touch other people. This can spread radiation.
- Remove your outer layer of clothing, including shoes.
- Do not remove clothes over your head. If possible, cut clothes off.
- Put clothes in a plastic bag and seal it.
- Put sealed bags where others will not touch it.
- Keep cuts and abrasions covered when handling contaminated items.
- When it is safe, take a shower or wash yourself as best you can with soap and water.
- Await directions from local and state authorities.

## MORE INFORMATION

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