

Glossary of terms

BACKGROUND RADIATION is the radioactivity that occurs naturally in our environment. The level of background radiation in the Rochester area is about 300 millirem per year.

DECONTAMINATION is the removal of contaminating radioactive material from a structure, area, object or person.

EMERGENCY ALERT SYSTEM (EAS) is a system that gives government officials the ability to issue emergency instructions to the public, as warranted, in the event of a threatened or actual emergency. Instructions will be broadcast periodically over participating local radio and television stations. EAS programming on stations in this area normally originates through WHAM-AM 1180, WVOR-FM 100.5 MHz, or WHEC-TV (Channel 10).

EMERGENCY PLANNING ZONE (EPZ) is the area surrounding the nuclear power station site for which planning has been done to assure that prompt and effective actions can be taken to protect the public in the event of a radiological incident. A circle, approximately ten (10) miles around the site is called the plume exposure pathway; and a circle, approximately fifty (50) miles around the site is called the ingestion exposure pathway.

EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLANNING AREA (ERPA) is a defined area within the 10-mile plume exposure EPZ for which emergency response plans have been developed, including notification of emergency protective actions, sheltering or evacuation. There are seven ERPAs in Wayne County designated as W-1, W-2, W-3, W-4, W-5, W-6 and W-7. Monroe County has nine ERPAs designated as M-1, M-2, M-3, M-4, M-5, M-6, M-7, M-8 and M-9.

EMERGENCY SIREN SYSTEM is a system of sirens installed throughout the 10-mile EPZ which can be activated for periods of three to five minutes. They are a signal for you to listen to your radio or television for specific emergency instructions by tuning to any local station that is carrying EAS programming. The signal does not mean you should evacuate the area.

ENGINEERED SAFETY FEATURES are included in power station systems to prevent or reduce the consequences of a nuclear malfunction. Parts of these systems are tested monthly throughout the year.

FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY (FEMA) has the lead responsibility for all off-site nuclear emergency planning and response. FEMA is charged with establishing policy and coordinating all civil emergency planning and assistance functions for federal agencies.

GAMMA RAYS are a form of electromagnetic high-energy radiation and are similar to x-rays.

HALF-LIFE is the time required for a radioactive substance to lose one-half of its original radioactivity. Half-life can vary from minutes to years according to the substance.

INGESTION EXPOSURE PATHWAY (50-mile EPZ) is, for planning purposes, the area within approximately a 50-mile radius surrounding a nuclear station. The principal exposure from this pathway would be from the ingestion of contaminated water or food.

JOINT NEWS CENTER (JNC) receives and processes emergency information from utility, county and state officials for accurate and timely dissemination to the public through the news media.

MILLIREM is the unit used to measure radiation dosage. It is 1/1000th of a REM. REM stands for Roentgen Equivalent Man, a measure of radiation that indicates potential impact on human cells.

NOBLE GASES are radioactive gases that do not react chemically with other materials and are not accumulated or retained. Most of the radioactive materials released in a nuclear station emergency are noble gases such as xenon and krypton.

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION (NRC) is the federal government agency that is responsible for the licensing, regulation and inspection of nuclear power stations.

PLUME EXPOSURE PATHWAY (10-mile EPZ) is, for planning purposes, the area within a 10-mile radius surrounding a nuclear station. The principal exposure sources from this pathway are: (1) whole body exposure to gamma radiation from the plume and deposited material, and (2) inhalation exposure from the passing radioactive plume.

RECEPTION CENTER is a designated location at which initial assistance is provided for evacuees. The assistance includes registration, first aid, if necessary, and assignment to a medical facility, if needed.

SHELTERING means staying inside a structure such as your home or place of business, and limiting ways outside air can enter the structure. By limiting the exchange of air between outside and inside, you limit the amount of airborne radioactive materials that you can come in contact with.

STATE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE (SEMO) provides overall coordination of radiological preparedness and coordination between governmental agencies and the nuclear industry within the state.

WAYNE COUNTY EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE (EMO) has the lead responsibility for off-site nuclear emergency planning and operations for Wayne County residents. It functions as a coordinating agency for governmental and private/volunteer agency support in such emergencies.