

WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?

The ABC's and 123's of the Torrance Community Warning System

**Do you know how you'd be notified
in the event of a chemical emergency?
Would you know what to do?**

Not surprisingly, many people find the Torrance Community Warning System (TCWS) a bit confusing. Although the chance of a chemical emergency is small, it is essential to plan for such an occurrence. Therefore, it is important for you to know what to do. As accidental releases can occur quickly, you may be on your own to recognize an emergency and act appropriately.

The ABC's of TCWS

The TCWS is comprised of warning tools that are used to alert the community of a chemical emergency within the City of Torrance. To ensure consistent community safety, the Torrance Fire Department (TFD) has sole responsibility to decide what tools to use, when to use them, and what area within the community to notify. To make these decisions, TFD uses a set of pre-determined procedures and guidelines. Having a variety of "tools" in their "toolbox" allows decisions to be made based upon the nature of the incident. It is important to note that not all of the tools will be used in every incident. It is also important to note that not every area will be notified and not every person will be notified.

Although the TCWS is a City of Torrance program, local companies and organizations, including Dow Chemical, Torrance Unified School District, CAER and ExxonMobil support and promote the elements of the TCWS.

The 123's of TCWS



WHAT? COMMUNITY ALERT SIRENS: Located on ExxonMobil property, these sirens are used to alert residents who live up to a 1.2 mile radius from the Torrance Refinery. The alert sirens can be used for an emergency at the refinery or at other local facilities with no relation to ExxonMobil. When used, the alert sirens wail continuously for several minutes, followed by a short break, followed by subsequent continuous wailing. Chimes (such as the Westminster Abbey chimes) will signal the "all-clear." It is important to remember that the alert sirens are tested on the first Wednesday of each month at approximately 11:30 a.m.

WHEN ARE THEY USED? The Community Alert Sirens are used when a serious chemical emergency poses a significant threat to the health or safety of a large population of the community.

WHERE SHOULD YOU GO? When the alert sirens sound (except during testing times), the appropriate response is to Shelter In Place.



WHAT? CRENSHAW STREET BARRIERS: Street closure barriers, similar to railroad barriers, have been added to Crenshaw Boulevard – one located near 190th Street to prohibit southbound traffic, and one located near Del Amo Boulevard to prohibit northbound traffic.

WHEN ARE THEY USED? In the event of a chemical emergency that has the potential to affect Crenshaw Boulevard, the barriers would be used to prohibit traffic from entering the affected area.

WHERE WOULD YOU GO? If the barrier goes down behind your vehicle, keep driving unless emergency personnel direct otherwise. If your vehicle is prohibited from entering the affected area by the barriers, stop and Shelter In Place until emergency service personnel (i.e., police or fire) arrive to direct you appropriately. In all cases, close windows and vents, and turn off your vehicle air conditioner/heater. If your engine stalls, DO NOT start your engine unless directed by emergency service personnel. Tune your radio to 1620 AM CitiSOUNDS and listen for further instructions.



WHAT? RADIO ALERT NETWORK (RAN): RAN is a network of tone-activated radios designed to provide emergency response information to facilities with large populations, such as schools, day care facilities, convalescent homes and senior centers. The receivers are one-way communication devices that can be placed on a table or desktop. The receivers and network are maintained by TFD. Tone-activated radio receivers are available for purchase from TFD for approximately \$240.00.

WHEN IS IT USED? Should there be a need for notification, TFD will activate the radio receivers and transmit emergency information and instructions. In addition to chemical emergency information, the City can use the RAN system for various notifications, such as school lock downs, criminal activity that could affect a large population and other events, as appropriate.

WHERE SHOULD YOU GO? Follow the instructions given to you by the recorded radio message. When the danger is over, TFD will deliver a message of “all clear, emergency over.”



WHAT? COMMUNITY ALERT NETWORK (CAN): CAN is a computerized telephone calling system. When used, the network will automatically dial the phones of homes and businesses within an area identified by TFD. If you should receive such a call, a recorded message will identify the emergency and tell you what to do.

WHEN IS IT USED? CAN is used at the discretion of TFD based on the nature of the incident. CAN is primarily used when a clearly identified area has been affected and calls can be made in enough time to warn the appropriate people.

WHERE SHOULD YOU GO? Follow the instructions given to you by the pre-recorded telephone message. When the danger is over, TFD will use CAN to deliver a message of “all clear, emergency over.” It is important to note that some voice mail systems, answering machines and residents with unlisted numbers are not able to receive the recorded message. It is suggested that you submit a direct-line number to TFD – one that doesn’t go through an automated switchboard. Submit to: TFD, c/o CAN Administrator, 1701 Crenshaw Blvd., Torrance, CA 90501. (Unlisted numbers will be held in confidence.)



WHAT? EMERGENCY SERVICES: As appropriate, Torrance Police and Fire Departments will work together to close roads to isolate and secure affected areas. If necessary, they will help evacuate people and businesses.

WHEN ARE THEY USED? At the discretion of emergency service personnel, such as police and fire.

WHERE SHOULD YOU GO? Follow the instructions given to you by police or fire officials.

What If You Don't Receive Notification?



USE YOUR SENSES! In many instances you will be on your own to identify an emergency. You will need to rely on your senses. If your eyes and/or throat burn, or there is a strong chemical smell, trust your senses and act appropriately.

WHEN SHOULD YOU USE THEM? All the time!

WHERE SHOULD YOU GO? Shelter In Place. Contact local emergency personnel to inquire about an emergency or tune to CitiCABLE, Channel 3 on the television, or 1620 AM CitiSOUNDS on the radio.

For additional information about Shelter In Place or the Torrance Community Warning System, please contact the Torrance Fire Department Fire Prevention Division at (310) 618-2973.

* In an agreement with the City of Torrance, ExxonMobil has the ability to initiate the use of the Community Alert Sirens and Crenshaw Street Barriers if an incident at the refinery warrants immediate community notification.

**CAER, Community Awareness and Emergency Response, is a nonprofit organization comprised of local industry, agency and community members.