

Shelter in Place

What it means to "Shelter-in-Place"

"Shelter-in-Place" is a request to seek immediate shelter indoors following the announcement of an emergency condition. Sheltering-in-Place means to make a shelter of the building that you are in, and with a few adjustments this location may be made even safer and more comfortable until it is safe to go outside.

Sheltering can be related to a variety of situations: severe weather emergencies, hazardous condition, chemical release, or criminal activity. The basic concept behind Sheltering-In-Place is to put barriers between yourself and the danger, while maintaining awareness, communications, and safety.

If the situation warrants and it is say to do so, evacuation of a hazardous environment is preferred. Sheltering-in-Place should only be used when it is not safe to evacuate your current location. In some instances it is safer to shelter in place than to evacuate a building, for example if there is smoke or fire is immediately outside your room; a violent person is in the building, live electrical wires bar access to the exit; individuals with mobility disabilities are on upper or lower floors.

Please remember that individuals cannot be forced to shelter in place. Therefore, it is important to maximize the cooperation within your building. Determine if all occupants will shelter or if some will leave the building. It is important that you be able to account for as many people as possible.

How You Will Know to "Shelter-in-Place"

A shelter-in-place notification may come from several UNT sources utilizing various communications tools.

How to "Shelter-in-Place"

No matter where you are, the basic method of sheltering-in-place will remain the same. Some situations may however necessitate taking different precautions when sheltering-in-place. Should the need ever arise, follow these basic steps, unless instructed otherwise by university personnel or if the situation warrants:

- If you are inside, stay where you are. Collect any emergency shelter-in-place supplies and a telephone to be used in case of emergency.
- If you are outdoors, proceed into the closest building quickly or follow instructions from emergency personnel on the scene.
- If there are others in the building, provide for their safety by asking them to stay – not leave.
- Unless there is an imminent threat, ask students, staff, and visitors to call their emergency contact to let them know where they are and that they are safe.
- Locate a room to shelter inside. It should be:
 - Rooms with no windows or exterior door
 - Rooms that have little or no ventilation

- The room(s) should have adequate space for everyone to be able to sit in it. Avoid overcrowding by selecting several rooms if necessary.
- Shut and lock all windows (tighter seal) and close exterior doors.
- If you are told there is a danger of explosion, close the window shades, blinds, or curtains.
- If possible, turn off air conditioners, heaters, and fans.
- If possible, close vents to ventilation systems.
- Make a list of the people with you and ask someone to call the list in to the UNT Police Department by dialing 940-565-3000 so they know where you are sheltering.
- Remain as calm as possible and know that the emergency situation is the central focus of emergency response personnel.
- Stay in-place until the danger has passed or conditions warrant an immediate evacuation. The University will use the Eagle Alert System to make an “all clear” announcement.

Shelter-in-place-- hazardous materials

Should an interior hazardous material release occur, the instruction would be to evacuate the building or area. In the event of an exterior hazardous material release (including chemical, biological or radiological), either accidentally, or intentionally, a Shelter-In-Place may be initiated.

Should an exterior hazardous material Shelter-In-Place be initiated the following procedures are recommended:

- Move indoors and remain there.
- Once indoors, remain in an office, classroom, residence hall room, or other indoor space. The best rooms to enter are interior rooms with no windows.
- Encourage everyone to immediately go into rooms and out of large public areas.
- Close and lock windows, doors, and seal the room as much as possible.
- Shut off heating, ventilation, air conditioning (HVAC) units if possible.
- Pull down blinds, turn off lights and any other electronic equipment.
- As warranted the university will send additional messages through the Eagle Alert System.
- If in a vehicle driving on campus, leave campus immediately – obeying traffic and speed regulations.
- Remain Sheltered-In-Place until informed by University officials that it is safe to leave or conditions warrant an immediate evacuation.

Shelter-in-place – violent person/hostile intruder

In the event that a person, or persons, pose a serious threat to the campus a Shelter-In-Place notification may be made. This would usually involve some form of violence, or a firearm, and necessitate immediate action. Should a Shelter-In-Place notification be initiated for this reason, the following procedures are recommended:

- Move indoors to a safe location.
- Get into a room, office, residence hall room, meeting room, etc. and lock all doors and windows.
- Blockade the door if possible with large/heavy furniture, or other heavy objects.

- Pull down blinds, block windows to door in an effort to obstruct vision from the hallway, turn off lights.
- If unable to get indoors, lie flat, get behind an obstruction, put distance between yourself and the danger and await police.
- Remain quiet, silence cell phones, and any other noise producing objects.
- Stay low to the ground, on floor, near solid interior walls, staying away from windows and doors.
- Take cover under furniture, or other large objects placing as many items as possible between you and the threat.
- Do not peek out windows, or doors, to see what may be occurring.
- Do not evacuate if fire alarm is activated unless you are positive a fire is occurring.
- If possible, and safe to do so, report the location of the violent person if known by dialing 911.
- Do not remain on cell phone unless a life and death emergency is occurring in your immediate vicinity.
- Help others when possible, especially the physically disabled.
- If you are in a vehicle during a Shelter-In-Place for violent person, leave campus immediately. Obey traffic and speed regulations.
- Remain in your Shelter-In-Place location until informed by police or circumstances warrant an immediate evacuation.
- When Police arrive do not run at them, or make sudden movements. Do not hold anything in your hand that could be mistaken for a weapon.
- Obey ALL commands given by police officers.

Shelter-in-place – weather emergency

Severe weather could suddenly develop which would initiate a Shelter-In-Place notification.

The most likely scenario would be a tornado warning, or sighting of a tornado close to campus. Should this occur, the following procedures are recommended.

- If outside seek shelter in the closest building.
- If possible, Do Not seek shelter in any large, free span room such as a gym, auditorium.
- Move to the lowest floor in the building, the basement is the best option if available.
- The best room choice is an interior room with no windows, or a small windowless first floor interior room like a closet, or restroom.
- If windows are in the room, close and lock windows and doors, pull down blinds.
- Center yourself under large furniture, or other objects, and protect yourself from flying glass, or debris.
- Remain as close to the floor as possible, stay out of corners and away from outside walls.
- Keep listening to the radio or the television until you are told the danger has passed.
- Remain in your Shelter-In-Place location until informed by University officials that it is safe to leave or conditions warrant an immediate evacuation.
- After notifying your emergency contact, remain off the cell phone, especially after a tornado strike.
- If anyone is seriously injured, dial 911 and request assistance. Report minor injuries to university personnel.