

ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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NEWS RELEASE

Residents should take protective actions because of sarin release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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The Alabama Department of Public Health has been advised that an incident involving _____ has led to the release of the nerve agent sarin. Residents of _____ (list affected areas) are encouraged to take protective action to prevent exposure and seek medical attention if they have been exposed.

Sarin is a nerve agent that affects a person's nervous system. Sarin, commonly known as GB, is clear, colorless and tasteless. It was manufactured as a chemical agent and can take gas or liquid form. Sarin is highly volatile and lethal.

"We want people who are in the affected areas to take this threat seriously and take precautions to limit exposure to themselves and others," said _____ (Public Health spokesperson). "We also want those who have been exposed to take measures to prevent serious harm and to seek medical attention immediately if they have any symptoms."

Once sarin is released into the air, people can become ill by breathing the agent in, ingesting it, or through skin or eye contact. Additionally, after a person has come into contact with the agent their clothing can release sarin for up to 30 minutes which can lead to exposure of other people.

Persons who were in the above affected areas and believe they may have come into contact with the agent should discard clothing, wash his or her body thoroughly with soap and water, flush irritated eyes, and seek medical attention if they have any of the following symptoms:

- difficulty breathing
- tightness in chest

- respiratory arrest
- nausea
- drowsiness
- vomiting
- diarrhea
- confusion and seizures
- drooling
- runny nose
- eye irritation and tearing
- severe muscle weakness

The antidotes atropine and pralidoxime are the preferred treatments for those exposed to sarin. The department has scheduled a point of distribution site at _____ (location - city) from _____ (time) to distribute atropine. The _____ (medication) will be designated for the following priority groups:

- Priority group
- Priority group
- Priority group

Stay tuned to your local radio or television stations for more information, developments or changes in the situation. For more information on nerve agents, please visit www.cdc.gov.