

# ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## *NEWS RELEASE*

Residents should take protective actions because of soman 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 soman. Residents of \_\_\_\_\_ (list affected areas) are encouraged to take protective action to prevent exposure and seek medical attention if they have been exposed.

Soman is a nerve agent that affects a person's nervous system. Soman, commonly known as GD, is clear, colorless and tasteless and has a slight odor similar to that of rotting fruit. It was manufactured as a chemical agent and can take gas or liquid form. Soman is highly volatile and lethal.

Once soman 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 his or her clothing can release soman for up to 30 minutes which can lead to exposure of other people. Persons who believe they have been exposed should immediately remove their clothing, place it in a plastic bag, seal it, and discard the bag as soon as possible.

“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.”

Persons who were in the above affected areas and believe they may have come into contact with the agent should discard clothing, wash their body thoroughly with soap

and water, flush irritated eyes, and seek medical attention if they have any of the following symptoms:

- runny nose
- watery eyes
- small, pinpoint pupils
- eye pain
- blurred vision
- cough
- chest tightness
- drooling or excessive sweating
- diarrhea
- rapid breathing
- increased urination
- confusion
- drowsiness
- weakness
- headache
- nausea, vomiting and/or abdominal pain
- slow or fast heart rate
- abnormally high blood pressure
- muscle twitching

The antidotes atropine and pralidoxime are the preferred treatments for those exposed to soman. 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](http://www.cdc.gov).

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