

# ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## *NEWS RELEASE*

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

VX is a nerve agent that affects a person's nervous system. It is considered the most toxic of all nerve agents and is particularly dangerous because it requires only small amounts to cause serious injury or harm.

Once VX is released into the air, people can become exposed to the agent through skin or eye contact or through breathing in the VX vapor mist. Additionally, after a person has come into contact with the agent his or her clothing can release VX 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 antidote atropine is the preferred treatment for those exposed to VX. Most people recover completely if the antidote is given quickly after exposure. 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).

xx/xx/xx