

Why is Chemical Attack Awareness Important?

Each day, over 36 million people use public transportation in the United States. Mass transit systems are open by nature with close proximity to significant infrastructure. These systems also have minimal passenger or baggage screening and a high volume of people in confined spaces. This combination makes launching a chemical attack on mass transit systems a particularly attractive tactic for our adversaries.

A successful attack could result in loss of life, significant injuries, and major disruptions to our transportation systems. We rely on engaged mass transit professionals to help keep the traveling public and our Nation safe from terrorist attacks.

Report It!

If you suspect a chemical agent has been released or observe two or more people suddenly experiencing one or more of the symptoms below, maintain a safe distance, follow your agency's security protocols, and call 911.

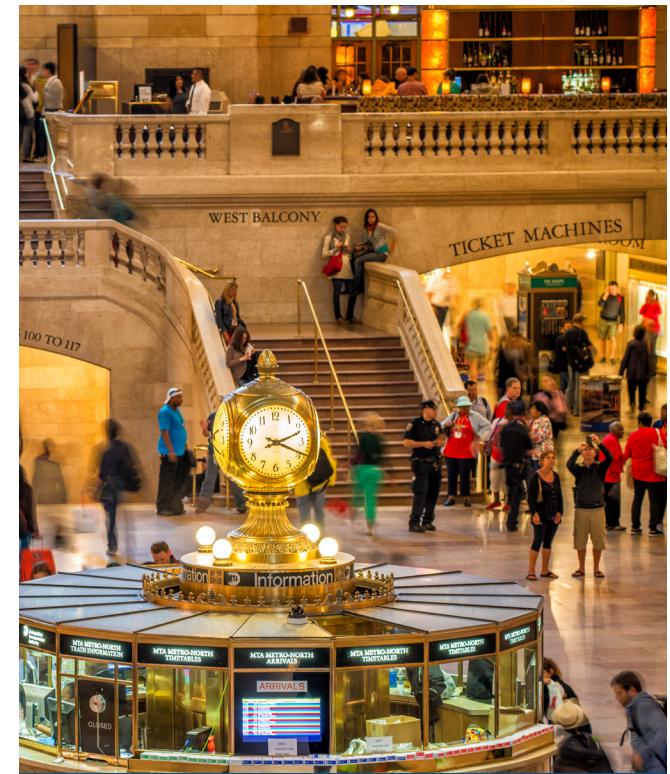
- Difficulty breathing
- Uncontrollable coughing
- Complaints of an unusual odor or nausea
- Seizures or convulsions
- Irritation of eyes, throat, skin, or lungs
- Complaints of blurred vision
- Loss of consciousness

For more information please contact us at:
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Transportation Security
Administration

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Chemical Attack Awareness

For Mass Transit
System Employees



Transportation
Security
Administration

Chemical Attacks

A **chemical attack** is the deliberate release of a toxic gas, liquid or solid that can poison people and the environment.

A wide variety of chemicals can be made, stolen, or otherwise acquired for use in an attack. These include:

- Chemical weapons (warfare agents) developed for military use
- Toxic industrial and commercial chemicals that are produced, transported, and stored in the making of petroleum, textiles, plastics, fertilizers, paper, foods, pesticides, household cleaners, and other products

Indicators

Indications that a chemical agent is present can include the following:

- An unexplainable pungent odor (smells may range from fruity to flowery to sharp or rotten eggs)
- A particular odor completely out of character with the surroundings
- Two or more people with the same symptoms
- A suspicious package emitting a vapor/odor
- Abandoned, out-of-place aerosol or manual spray device (e.g., fire extinguisher, garden sprayer)
- A cloud, mist, fine powder, dust, liquid or fog with no identifiable or suspected source

In Case of Exposure

Symptoms of a chemical agent are generally widespread and immediately exhibited. Following exposure, you should:

- Find clean air quickly. Exit the building if you can do so without passing through the contaminated area or break a window
- Remove outer clothing and place it in a sealed plastic bag
- Wash skin with soap and water and flush eyes with water if irritated
- Seek medical attention, even if you have no immediate symptoms

