

Information note on chemical release No 1

May 2017

Warning signs of a chemical release

A chemical release may not always be immediately apparent given the fact that many agents are odourless and colourless, and some cause no immediately noticeable effects or symptoms.

Be alert to the possible presence of a chemical. Indicators include:

- Activated emergency warning systems
- Emergency personnel activity and an announcement
- People wearing personal protective equipment such as breathing protection and chemical protection suits
- Discarded personal protective equipment
- Explosion with little or no structural damage
- Droplets of oily film on surfaces
- Unusual liquid, sprays or vapours
- Low-lying clouds or fog unrelated to weather; clouds of dust; or suspended particles
- Unusual or unauthorized spraying in the area
- Unexplained odours (e.g. garlic, bitter almonds, peach kernels, newly mown hay or grass, horseradish)
- Unusual number of dead or dying animals in the area
- Multiple people displaying similar features e.g. retching, difficulty breathing, convulsions, disorientation or collapse
- Mass casualties with no apparent reason or trauma