

Main News

- Special Reports ·
- [Black Flight Census](#)
- [2000 Election](#)
- [Changing of the Guard](#)
- [A Measure of Justice](#)
- [1969 Riot Investigation](#)
- [The Rusk Report 2002](#)

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- [About us](#)
- [Announcements](#)
- [Calendar of Events](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
- [County History](#)
- [Newslibrary](#)
- [News Projects](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [Pets](#)
- [Photos](#)
- [ProQuest Archive](#)
- [YDR Links](#)
- [YDR Store](#)



- Main**
- Local
- Sports
- Business
- Living
- Opinion

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Plans for a quick exit

Evacuation plans near nuclear power plants have been revisited since last year's terrorist attacks.

By TERESA ANN BOECKEL
Daily Record staff
Tuesday, September 10, 2002

See also: [Power plant evacuation routes](#)
[pdf file]

A year ago, as terrorists attacked the United States and officials reported that another plane was in the air over Pennsylvania, Larry Christian and his wife picked up their daughter at a nursery school that is in sight of the Three Mile Island nuclear power plant.

The attacks prompted Christian to ask a question: How would children at nursery schools and day-care centers be evacuated if there would be an emergency at TMI, the site of the worst nuclear accident in the nation's history?

He asked the director of their daughter's nursery school, Salem Community in Fairview Township, about its evacuation plans. She checked and confirmed they did not have any. Christian then called local and state officials. He found that

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day-care centers and nursery schools are not required to have emergency evacuation plans in case there is an emergency at a nuclear power plant.

So last week, with the assistance of watchdog group, Three Mile Island Alert, Christian submitted a petition to the U.S.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The petition asks that all day-care centers and nursery schools are properly protected in case of an emergency at a nuclear power plant.

“We’re not happy that there is no evacuation (plan),” Christian, of Fairview Township, said.

The lack of such a plan isn’t the only concern when it comes to evacuating people within a 10-mile radius of TMI or Peach Bottom Atomic Power Station in an emergency.

Depending on the weather and time of year, it could take anywhere from 6 hours and 30 minutes to 11 hours and 10 minutes to evacuate the entire 10-mile radius around TMI, according to a 1994 study.

For those who live within 10 miles of Peach Bottom, the times range between 3 hours and 15 minutes to 5 hours and 50 minutes, according to a 1990 study.

The county’s population has grown since those studies, so it could take longer.

The studies are being updated by Earth Tech Inc. in Concord, Mass. Dr. Richard Londergan, who is working on the study, said he expects that the report will be finished by the end of the year.

That study will determine whether the current evacuation routes are adequate or need to be revised, according to David Carl, a spokesman for Exelon Nuclear

Corp., which co-owns TMI.

The phone book outlines the routes for residents to take if officials order an evacuation. Residents in York Haven, for example, would drive south on Interstate 83 and head to Susquehannock High School in Shrewsbury Township.

If an emergency happens while school is in session, students would be bused to a host school outside of the 10-mile radius.

Parents would be expected to pick up their children at the host school — not at their home school. Parents who do not know where their children could go may call the district for details.

That is why planning is important for families in case there is an evacuation, according to Patrick McFadden, the county's executive director of emergency management.

Families should talk about where they would go and select two people — relatives or friends — who live at least 20 miles away — to serve as contacts. Those contacts can help relay information if the family is split up at different mass care centers or other locations, McFadden said.

People also should be prepared to take shelter in their own homes, which officials could order instead of evacuating.

Hopefully residents will never need to use the plans, but they'll feel secure with the plans, McFadden said.

While it may take hours to evacuate the 10-mile radius around the nuclear plants, and people may not be able to drive 60 mph, McFadden said, "I think there's sufficient time for people to get out of the area."

Highways, such as I-83, would become four-way lanes in one direction from the evacuation zone, according to Mike Fetrow, deputy coordinator with the York County Department of Emergency Services.

There are those who remain skeptical, though, about whether an evacuation would work.

“The evacuation plans are fatally flawed in our opinion,” said Eric Epstein, chairman of TMI Alert in Harrisburg. The group, which formed two years before the 1979 TMI accident, is concerned about state and national regulation of the nuclear-power industry.

The plan assumes that there is an invisible lead curtain surrounding the 10-mile radius of the plant, Epstein said. People who live outside of the 10-mile radius will leave too, he said.

During the TMI accident, more than 140,000 people left the area, he said. Officials need to consider other problems: What if there is a bad snowstorm? What if it happens when there is heavy traffic heading to a football game in Happy Valley?

And not everyone plans to follow the evacuation route plans.

Carl Huntzinger, 77, and his wife, Norma, live in East Manchester Township and, according to evacuation plans, should head south on Route 24 to Red Lion Area High School.

The Huntzingers, though, plan to travel west and make a big circle through the northern part of Pennsylvania to reach their camp in Hegins, Schuylkill County. They are not interested in reporting to a mass care site.

“You can’t try to figure out something that hasn’t happened, and you don’t know the variables,” he said.

While legislation does not require evacuation plans for day-care centers or nursery schools, some have started devising their own plans.

Clayton Ort, director of the Laugh ‘N’ Learn Day Care Center in Newberry Township, said he would pack a 15-passenger van with kids and cribs, food and other necessities. Other day-care workers would take children in their vans as well. They would head to the Hanover area.

The day care started taking a serious look at its plans after Sept. 11. Ort said they started calling around for help in creating their plan but kept being referred to other people. Finally, they reached the emergency management coordinator for their municipality, who helped them come up with a plan.

Ort said he thinks officials got an education as he did.

Local emergency management officials plan to have meetings with day-care centers and nursery schools throughout the entire county about evacuation plans. They are needed whether it is a nuclear accident, a gas leak or a chemical spill anywhere in the county, McFadden said.

The department had tried to have a similar meeting last year before Sept. 11, but few showed up, McFadden said.

“We think we’re going to have a bigger response post 9/11,” he said.

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[top](#)

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TMI evacuation routes

If you are asked to evacuate, locate the route and reception center designated for your municipality, and use the map as a guide. Or go to a friend or relative outside the evacuation zone. If you need a ride, try to go with a neighbor or co-worker.

Conewago Township
 ■ **For the area EAST of Lewisberry Road:** Take I-83 south to Glen Rock exit to Route 216 west to Route 616 south to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**
 ■ **For the area WEST of Lewisberry Road:** Take local routes west to Route 74 south to Route 30 west to **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**

Dover Township*
 ■ Take Route 74 south to Route 30 west to **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**

East Manchester Township
 ■ **For the area EAST of the Conrail Railroad tracks:** Take Route 24 south to **Red Lion Area High School.**
 ■ **For the area WEST of the Conrail Railroad tracks:** Take I-83 south to Glen Rock exit to Route 216 west to Route 616 south to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**

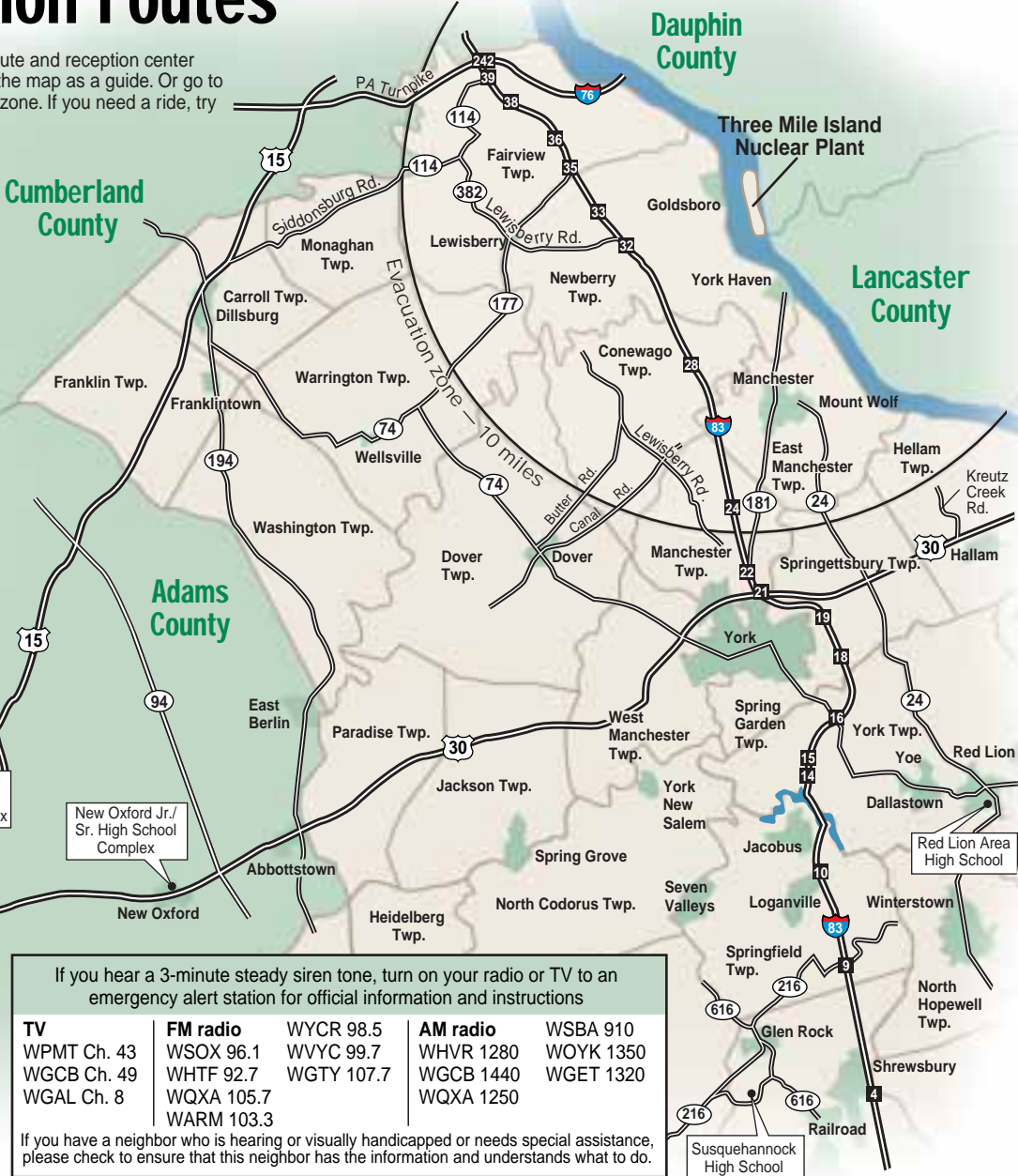
Fairview Township
 ■ **For the area EAST of I-83:** Take I-83 north to PA Turnpike west to Route 15 south to Route 30 west to **Gettysburg Jr./Sr. High School Complex.**
 ■ **For the area WEST of I-83:** Take Route 382 and Route 114 west to Route 15 south to Route 30 west to **Gettysburg Jr./Sr. High School Complex.**

Goldsboro
 ■ Take I-83 north to PA Turnpike west to Route 15 south to Route 94 south to **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**

Hellam Township*
 ■ Take Kreutz Creek Road south to Route 30 West to Route 24 south to **Red Lion Area High School.**

Lewisberry
 ■ Take Route 382 and Route 114 west to Route 15 south to Route 94 south to **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**

Manchester
 ■ Take Route 181 south to I-83 south to Glen Rock exit to Route 216 west to Route 616 south to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**



If you hear a 3-minute steady siren tone, turn on your radio or TV to an emergency alert station for official information and instructions

TV	FM radio	WYCR 98.5	AM radio	WSBA 910
WPMT Ch. 43	WSOX 96.1	WVYC 99.7	WHVR 1280	WOYK 1350
WGCB Ch. 49	WHTF 92.7	WGTU 107.7	WGCB 1440	WGET 1320
WGAL Ch. 8	WQXA 105.7		WQXA 1250	
	WARM 103.3			

If you have a hearing or visually handicapped or needs special assistance, please check to ensure that this neighbor has the information and understands what to do.

Manchester Township*
 ■ **For the area EAST of Lewisberry Rd:** Take I-83 south to Glen Rock exit to Route 216 west to Route 616 south to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**
 ■ **For the area WEST of Lewisberry Road:** Take local routes west to Route 74 south to Route 30 west to **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**

Mount Wolf
 ■ Take Route 24 south to **Red Lion Area High School.**

Newberry Township
 ■ **For the area NORTH of Newberrytown/EAST of I-83:** Take I-83 north to PA Turnpike west to Route 15 south to Route 94 south **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**
 ■ **For the area SOUTH of Newberrytown/EAST of I-83:** Take I-83 south to Glen Rock exit to Route 216 west to Route 616 south to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**

■ **For the area WEST of I-83:** Take Route 382 and Route 114 west to Route 15 south to **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**

Springettsbury Township*
 ■ Take Route 24 south to **Red Lion Area High School.**

Warrington Township*
 ■ Take Route 177 and Route 74 west to Route 194 south to Route 30 west to **New Oxford Jr./Sr. High School complex.**

York Haven
 ■ Take I-83 south to Glen Rock exit to Route 216 west to Route 616 south to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**

Peach Bottom evacuation routes

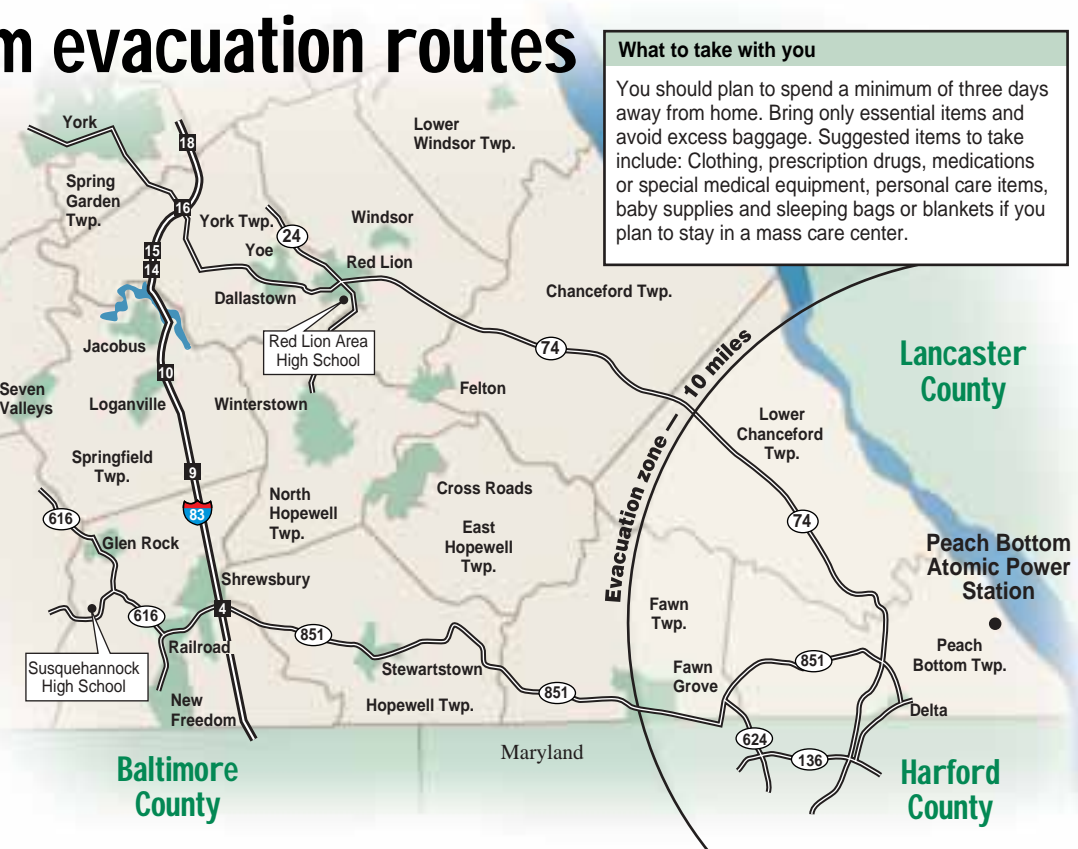
Delta
 ■ Take Main Street to Maryland Route 136 west to Route 624 north to Route 851 west to Route 616 north to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**

Fawn Grove*
 ■ Take Route 851 west to Route 616 north to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**

Fawn Township*
 ■ Take local routes to Route 851 west to Route 616 north to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**

Lower Chanceford Township*
 ■ Take local routes to Route 74 north to **Red Lion Area High School.**

Peach Bottom Township
 ■ Take local routes to Route 851 west to Route 616 north to Fissels Church Road to **Susquehannock High School.**



What to take with you

You should plan to spend a minimum of three days away from home. Bring only essential items and avoid excess baggage. Suggested items to take include: Clothing, prescription drugs, medications or special medical equipment, personal care items, baby supplies and sleeping bags or blankets if you plan to stay in a mass care center.

*Partially located in evacuation zone