

Recovery Phase

Post Explosion Public Health Advice

For people living near demolition work and dusty areas

Background

Following the explosion on the August 4, the wider environment was contaminated with dust and particulate matter from the blast, and building debris which contained fibres, powdered glass, silica, potentially small concentrations of metals and other chemicals. Despite clean-up activities, some dust and debris may remain in the environment. Also, as buildings are repaired demolition and remediation work is required which can generate more dust. In these circumstances, it is sensible to reduce your exposure to dust, therefore the following is recommended:



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If demolition work is being undertaken close to your home or the area is very dusty

- Limit your time spent outdoors, especially if you are in a vulnerable group.
- Vulnerable groups include young children, pregnant women, elderly or those with respiratory conditions, such as asthma.
- Close intact windows and doors as much as possible. If they were broken in the explosion, temporarily seal broken windows and doors with plastic or nylon.
- If available, turn on the air conditioning in your home, as much as possible.
- Consider airing or ventilating your property at times when dust levels outside are lower (e.g. after rain), or when demolition work has temporarily ceased.
- Try to avoid tracking dust back into your property by removing dusty shoes and clothing if needed.

If there is dust inside your home

- Wear the most protective face mask (preferably having N95 or N98 respirator if available) and gloves you have. Try to avoid disturbing dusty deposits as much as you can; avoid sweeping or normal / dry vacuuming unless the Hoover is water-based or has a filter.
- Dampen down surfaces with small amounts of water (e.g. spray) then use a damp cloth, wet towel or mop to clean the surfaces.

If there is dust inside your home

- Encourage children to stay away from dusty areas and especially buildings being refurbished or demolished.
- Avoid contact with any suspect material if authorities have informed you asbestos is present.
- If you must spend time in dusty areas, wear the most protective face mask you have (preferably having N95 or N98 respirator if available).
- Typical surgical masks used for Covid-19 will not be effective at protecting you from finer dusts.
- If you suffer from asthma, or any other respiratory condition, take your inhaler and normal medication with you.
- When in your car, drive safely and slowly to minimise dust disturbance. Avoid driving over any damaged building materials if possible.

Don't forget to follow COVID-19 [Precautions](#) including social distancing and regular handwashing

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