



National
Operational
Guidance

Control measure

Containment: Radioactive materials



NFCC
National Fire
Chiefs Council

Developed and maintained by the NFCC



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Control measure knowledge

An unsealed source is a dust, powder or liquid. When released within a building the source can be contained within the confines of the structure. When released outside, weather conditions can significantly affect the dispersal of the material.

The hierarchy of pollution control can be used as framework to identify the most appropriate intervention. Methods for containing unsealed radioactive materials may include:

- Closing or returning to the container
- Switching off ventilation inside a building
- Closing doors and windows
- Covering spillages when they occur outside
- Using booms for containing liquid contaminants

For further information regarding the prevention of environmental contamination see [National Operational Guidance: Environmental Protection](#)

Strategic actions

Fire and rescue services should:

- Provide procedures and support arrangements regarding the hazards that may be encountered and actions to take to prevent unsealed radioactive sources being dispersed into the environment
- Provide containment equipment to prevent the dispersal of radioactive materials

Tactical actions

Incident commanders should:

- Attempt to contain the release of any radioactive materials as close to the source as possible



- Gain specialist advice regarding the mitigation of a release of radiation sources
- Consider deploying environmental protection equipment to prevent contamination from entering a water course
- Monitor elevated background radiation down-wind of the incident
- Liaise with specialist agencies to arrange for all radioactive contaminants to be managed on scene