

PRESS RELEASE

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Marshfield Board of Health to Provide Potassium Iodide to Marshfield residents

The Marshfield Board of Health is working with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Center for Environmental Health's Radiation Control Program to enhance preparedness efforts for communities within the 10 mile Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) of the Pilgrim nuclear power plant. The Board of Health has recently received a new supply of potassium iodide (KI) pills from MDPH and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission that will protect residents from certain types of radiation should a nuclear power plant emergency occur.

KI is an iodide salt that ensures that the thyroid gland has adequate iodine to prevent the uptake of radioactive iodine, a substance that might be released during a nuclear power plant emergency, thereby preventing health impacts to the thyroid. In the unlikely event of a significant emergency at this plant, residents including children would be advised to take KI. Distribution to EPZ communities is required under a statute passed in 2002 (M.G.L. c. 111, Sec.5K(F)). Administered KI is effective for about 24 hours. Once individuals leave areas affected by a release, there is no need to continue taking KI.

KI tablets provided to EPZ communities by MDPH will have an extended shelf life until 2019. Local Boards of Health have worked with MDPH to develop a KI distribution plan and to provide a supply of KI directly to the communities, consistent with the state statute. The distribution plan ensures that communities have KI available should an emergency occur by facilitating more rapid, pre-event distribution.

The Town of Marshfield makes KI available to Marshfield residents via distribution through the Board of Health Office during business hours 8:30am to 4:30pm Monday – Friday. For more information on KI tablet distribution, contact the Marshfield Board of Health at Town Hall, 870 Moraine St., Marshfield, phone (781) 834-5558.