

# INFORMATION SHEET ON POTASSIUM IODIDE (KI)

## **Background:**

The Ohio Department of Health developed a policy statement regarding the use of potassium iodide. The policy provides the following:

- KI is to be pre-distributed to residents and schools in the 10-mile emergency planning zone.
- Emergency plans should be modified to recommend the evacuation of school children at the declaration of site area emergency when conditions at the nuclear power plant warrant this type of action.
- State and local emergency plans are to be modified to incorporate measures and procedures to provide for the use of KI as a supplemental measure to evacuation.

The Perry School buildings are located within the 10-mile emergency planning zone of the Perry Nuclear Power Plant. The buildings will store and will use KI in the schools as notified by the Lake County Emergency Management Agency and the Health Department.

KI is an over-the-counter drug that protects the thyroid from exposure to radioactive iodine and can reduce the risk of thyroid cancer after a severe nuclear emergency event resulting in a release of radiation. It is not an alternative to evacuation and sheltering. In fact, **evacuation** and **sheltering** remain Ohio's primary public protective actions in the event of an accident at a nuclear generating station.

Should the Lake County Health Department and the Emergency Planning Agency recommend the use of KI during an emergency, the schools will have KI available on site for your children. Evacuation remains our primary protective radiological action. In the event that evacuation is not immediately possible and KI is recommended by the County health officials and the emergency management agency officials, an appropriate dose of KI will be available for the school students.

## **Question:**

Why are schools being asked to store and possibly administer KI?

Schools play a vital role in the County radiological preparedness plans. Each school within 10 miles of a nuclear generating station (the emergency planning zone) will have a supply of KI to allow for distribution to occur at the school. In the event that the school needs to be quickly evacuated, KI will also be available to those children at the receiving school in Chardon.