FACT SHEET – VX

VX IS A POISON

- VX is man-made.
  - It is made for chemical warfare.
  - It is not used for other purposes.
  - It is not found in nature.

- VX is usually a liquid but can be a gas.
  - It is a yellow and oily liquid.
  - People cannot smell or taste it.
  - It can last for days or months in the environment.

- VX works on the body’s nerves.
  - It keeps muscles and glands from being able to “turn off.”
  - Muscles tire and finally stop working.
  - This can stop breathing.

VX IS VERY DANGEROUS

- VX is the most powerful “nerve agent.”
  - People exposed to VX will get sick in seconds to hours.
  - A drop the size of a pinhead can affect people.
  - VX poisoning depends on
    o how it is taken into the body
    o how much the body gets
    o how much time the body is exposed to it

- People can be harmed if VX
  - gets on their skin or in their eyes
  - is in the food they eat or the water they drink
  - is in the air they breathe

FOR MORE INFORMATION:
Kentucky Cabinet for Health and Family Services Frankfort, KY
http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/preparedness

Kentucky Regional Poison Center Louisville, KY
EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222
Lake Cumberland District Health Dept. (606) 678 – 4761
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA
Toll free: 1-800-311-3435
http://www.bt.cdc.gov/agent/VX
FACT SHEET – VX (continued)

- If people get a large dose of VX they are likely to
  - pass out
  - have convulsions or be paralyzed
  - stop breathing

IT IS POSSIBLE TO SURVIVE EXPOSURE TO VX

- Avoiding VX is the best protection.
  - Get away and stay away from areas where it has been released.
  - VX sinks in air, so it is less likely to be on high ground.
  - Get to fresh air.

- There is an antidote.
  - The antidote blocks the effects of VX.
  - It must be given very quickly after exposure for it to work.
  - Other medical care can help, if given quickly.

- Recovery is possible.
  - If exposed to VX, get medical help as soon as possible.
  - People who get a small dose of VX can recover.
  - People who get a large dose often do not survive.