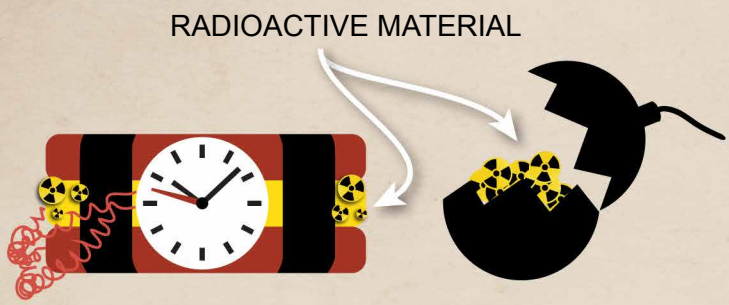
DIRTY BOMB OR RADIOLOGICAL DISPERSAL DEVICE

What is a dirty bomb?

A dirty bomb is a mix of explosives, such as dynamite, and radioactive powder or pellets. It is also known as a radiological dispersal device (RDD).

A dirty bomb cannot create an atomic blast.



When the bomb explodes, the blast carries radioactive material into the surrounding area.

What are the dangers from a dirty bomb?

The main danger from a dirty bomb comes from the explosion, not the radiation. The explosion can cause serious injuries and property damage. People nearby could be injured by pieces of radioactive material from the bomb. Only people who are very close to the blast site would be exposed to enough radiation to cause immediate serious illness. However, the radioactive dust and smoke can spread farther away and could be dangerous to health if people breathe in the dust, eat contaminated food, or drink contaminated water. People injured by radioactive pieces or contaminated with radioactive dust will need medical attention.

What should I do to protect myself?

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

http://emergency.cdc.gov/radiation