



Household Earthquake Preparedness

Before an Earthquake

- ✓ Determine the earthquake potential for your home site by looking at fault-zone maps and general soil maps. These are available at city and county planning offices. If your home is in an earthquake-prone region, contact licensed and experienced contractors to determine any mitigation steps needed.
- ✓ Most damage from earthquakes occurs from furniture or possessions toppling over.
 - Move heavy items such as pictures, mirrors and tall dressers away from your bed.
 - Secure tall furniture, bookcases and filing cabinets to wall studs with lag bolts or L-brackets.
 - Move the heaviest objects from top to bottom shelves. Add lips to shelves to prevent items from sliding off, and secure cupboard doors with latches that will prevent the doors from opening during an earthquake.
 - When possible, secure computers, television sets and stereo equipment with brackets and straps.
 - Make sure overhead light fixtures are securely fastened to the ceiling.
- ✓ Take a home inventory of your possessions. Keep it in a safe location outside of your home. It is a good idea to back up the home inventory with pictures or videotape of the items, and keep receipts and appraisals.
- ✓ Have an out-of-state contact for all family members to check in with should you be separated during an earthquake. Designate a family meeting place.
- ✓ Post a list of emergency phone numbers near the phone. If the home phone is not working after an earthquake, find the nearest pay phone, they are more reliable after a disaster.
- ✓ Make sure everyone in the home knows the location of the main gas, electric and water control points, and how to shut them off.
- ✓ Keep emergency supplies on hand, including flashlight, battery-operated radio, first-aid kit, fire extinguisher, extra supplies of food water and medication and blankets.

During an Earthquake

At Home

- ✓ Most earthquakes are over in less than 30 seconds. Remain calm and stay where you are until the shaking stops.
- ✓ If you are indoors, duck or drop down to the floor and take cover under a sturdy desk or table.
- ✓ Move away from windows, fireplaces, wood stoves and heavy furniture or appliances.

- ✓ Stay inside -- you may be injured going through a door or window, or be hit by falling glass, bricks or unstable facades that may fall outward from buildings.

Outside

- ✓ Move into an open area, away from buildings and utility lines. Be alert for falling rocks, landslides and runaway vehicles.

In a Car

- ✓ If possible, move your car out of the flow of traffic and stop. Avoid stopping under overpasses, bridges, large trees, light posts, power lines or large signs.
- ✓ Stay inside your car until the shaking stops.

After an Earthquake

- ✓ Check for personal injuries and administer first aid if needed.
- ✓ Check for damage that could cause a fire, flood or other catastrophe. If needed, shut off the gas valve, water supply or electrical power at the control box.
- ✓ Stay away from downed or damaged utility lines.
- ✓ Clean up any spills of medicines, combustible liquids or other potentially harmful materials.
- ✓ Use telephones or vehicles only in the event of life-threatening emergencies. Make sure all telephones are on their receivers; those off the hook tie up the telephone network unnecessarily.
- ✓ Watch or listen to the news and use the information to help you decide the best course of action.
- ✓ If your home is damaged, contact your insurance agent as soon as possible. Take pictures of the damage and make a list of lost items. Make only necessary repairs, and save the receipts, until a claims adjuster has reviewed the damage.
- ✓ Be careful of contractors that solicit business. Fraudulent contractors may take advantage of disaster victims.

Tips for Pet Owners

- ✓ Prepare a shelter kit for your pet including an unbreakable dish, veterinarian records, a restraint and medication with instructions.
- ✓ Do not try to hold your pet during the shaking. Animals will instinctively protect themselves and hide where they are safe.
- ✓ If you have outdoor pets, keep them indoors until the aftershocks have subsided and they have calmed down.
- ✓ If you must evacuate your home, leave your pet secured in a safe place. Pets may not be allowed at shelters. Be sure to leave plenty of clean water and food.