

## Earthquake Survival

### Before the Earthquake Strikes

How well you, your family and your home survive an earthquake often depends upon how well you prepare beforehand. The following checklist will help you get started:

1. Know the safe spots in each room – under sturdy tables, desks or against interior walls. Pick a spot away from windows, fireplaces, bookcases or tall furniture that could fall on you.
2. Conduct practice drills so you and your family know the safe locations in your home. Remember to “Drop, Cover, and Hold-on” during an earthquake.
3. Decide how and where your family will reunite if separated during an earthquake.
4. Learn how to shut off gas, water and electricity in case the lines are damaged. Do not attempt to relight the gas pilot. Call the utility company.
5. Learn first-aid and CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation) from your local Red Cross chapter or other community organizations.
6. You may want to secure your water heater and major appliances, as well as tall, heavy furniture, hanging plants, picture frames and mirrors.
7. Keep breakables, heavy objects and flammable or hazardous liquids (paints, pesticide sprays and cleaning products) in secured cabinets or on lower shelves.
8. Choose an out-of-state friend or relative that separated family members can call after the quake to report their whereabouts and conditions.

### During the Earthquake

1. **Drop, cover, and hold-on!** Move only a few steps to a nearby safe place. It is dangerous to try to leave a building during an earthquake because

objects can fall on you. Many fatalities occur when people run outside of buildings, only to be killed by falling objects or collapsing walls. In U.S. buildings, you are usually safer to stay where you are.

2. If you’re outside in an earthquake, stay outside. Move away from buildings, streetlights and power lines. Crouch down and cover your head.
3. If in a highrise building, stay away from windows and outside walls. Get under a table. Do not use elevators.
4. If driving, pull over to the side of the road and stop. Avoid overpasses and power lines. Stay inside your car until the shaking stops.
5. If in a crowded place, do not rush for the doors. Crouch and cover your head with your hands and arms.

### After the Earthquake

Unless there is an immediate, life-threatening emergency, do not attempt to use the telephone. After an earthquake, be sure to:

1. Check yourself for injuries. Often people tend to others without first checking themselves for injuries. You will be better able to care for others if you are not injured or if you have received treatment for your injuries.
2. Expect aftershocks. Each time you feel one, drop, cover and hold on. Aftershocks frequently occur minutes, days, weeks and even months following an earthquake.
3. Prepare to be self-sufficient for at least three days if it was a major earthquake.
4. Look for and extinguish small fires. Eliminate fire hazards. Fire is the most common problem following earthquakes.

5. Check for gas and water leaks, broken electrical wiring or sewage lines. If there is damage, turn off the utility at the source. Immediately report gas leaks to your utility company. Check for downed power lines; warn others to stay away.
6. Inspect your home for damage. Use battery powered lanterns or flashlights to inspect your home. Kerosene lanterns, candles, and matches may tip over or ignite flammables inside. Get everyone out if your home is unsafe because aftershocks can cause additional damage. Stay out of damaged buildings.
7. Turn on your portable radio for instructions and news reports. Local radio and local officials provide the most appropriate advice for a particular situation.
8. Stay calm and lend a hand to others, especially to the elderly or those that require special assistance.