

Earthquake Preparedness

Q: During an EQ should you head for the doorway?

A: Only if you live in an old, unreinforced adobe house. In modern homes doorways are no stronger than any other parts of the house and usually have doors that will swing and can injure you. **YOU ARE SAFER PRACTICING THE DUCK, COVER, AND HOLD** under a sturdy piece of furniture.

Q: What emergency supplies do I need?

A:

1. Fire extinguisher
2. Adequate supplies of medications that you or family members are taking
3. Crescent and pipe wrenches to turn off gas and water supplies
4. First-aid kit and handbook
5. Flashlights with extra bulbs and batteries
6. Portable radio with extra batteries
7. Water for each family member for at least 3 days (allow at least 1 gallon per person per day) and purification tablets or chlorine bleach to purify drinking water from other sources
8. Canned and package foods, enough for several days and **MECHANICAL** can opener. Extra food for pets if necessary
9. Camp stove or barbecue to cook on outdoors (store fuel out of the reach of children)
10. Waterproof, heavy-duty plastic bags for waste disposal.

Q: How can I plan ahead for an EQ?

A:

1. Make sure each member of your family knows what to do no matter where they are when EQs occur:
 - Establish a meeting place where you can all reunite afterward
 - Find out about EQ plans developed by children's school or day care
 - Remember transportation may be disrupted, keep some emergency supplies--food, liquids, and comfortable shoes, for example--at work

2. **KNOW** where you gas, electric and water main shutoffs are and how to turn them off if there is a leak or electrical short. Make sure older members of the family can shut off utilities
3. **LOCATE** your nearest fire and police stations and emergency medical facility
4. **TALK** to your neighbors--how could they help you, or you them after an EQ
5. **TAKE** Red Cross First Aid and CPR Training Course.

Q: What should I do during an EQ?

A:

1. If you are **INDOORS**--**STAY THERE!** (Get under a desk or table and hang on to it, or move into a hallway or get against an inside wall. **STAY CLEAR** of windows, fireplaces, and heavy furniture or appliances. **GET OUT** of the kitchen, which is a dangerous place (things can fall on you). **DON'T** run downstairs or rush outside while the bldg is shaking or while there is danger of falling and hurting yourself or being hit by falling glass or debris.
2. If you are **OUTSIDE**-- get into the **OPEN**, away from buildings, power lines, chimneys, and anything else that might fall on you.
3. If you are **DRIVING**--stop, but carefully. Move your car as far out of traffic as possible. **DO NOT** stop on or under a bridge or overpass or under trees, light posts, power lines, or signs. **STAY INSIDE** your car until the shaking stops. When you **RESUME** driving watch for breaks in the pavement, fallen rocks, and bumps in the road at bridge approaches.
4. If you are in a **MOUNTAINOUS AREA**--watch out for falling rock, landslides, trees, and other debris that could be loosened by quakes.

Q: Things NOT to do during an EQ?

A:

1. **DO NOT** turn on the gas again if you turned it off; let the gas company do it
2. **DO NOT** use matches, lighters, camp stoves or barbecues, electrical equipment, appliances **UNTIL** you are sure there are no gas leaks. They may create a spark that could ignite leaking gas and cause an explosion and fire
3. **DO NOT** use your telephone, **EXCEPT** for a medical or fire emergency. You could tie up the lines needed for emergency response. If the phone doesn't work send someone for help
4. **DO NOT** expect firefighters, police or paramedics to help you. They may not be available.

Q: What can I expect in my house when an EQ occurs? How do I identify it? What can be done?

A: The contents of your home may be damaged and can be dangerous:

1. Shaking can make light fixtures fall, refrigerators and other large items move across the floor, and bookcases and television sets topple over. IDENTIFY: Look around your house for things that could fall or move
2. Ask yourself if your cupboard doors fly open (allowing dishes to shatter on the floor)
3. Is TV and stereo fastened down and are shelves fastened to wall? Do you have hanging plants or light fixtures that might fall? Is there a heavy picture or mirror on the wall over your bed?

WHAT CAN BE DONE: You can install door latches, braces and fasteners to fix most of these hazards yourself.

Q: What do I do after an earthquake?

A:

1. WEAR STURDY SHOES to avoid injury from broken glass and debris. Expect aftershocks
2. CHECK FOR INJURIES (if a person is bleeding, put direct pressure on the wound, use clean gauze or cloth if available; If a person is not breathing administer CPR; DO NOT attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in further danger of injury; COVER injured persons with blankets to keep warm; SEEK medical help for serious injuries
3. CHECK FOR HAZARDS (Fire hazards--put out fires in your home or neighborhood immediately, call for help; Gas leaks--shut off main gas valve ONLY if you suspect a leak because of broken pipes or odor; Damaged electrical wiring--Shut off power at the control box if there is any danger to house wiring; Downed or damaged utility lines--do not touch downed power lines or any objects in contact with them; SPILLS--clean up any spilled medicines, drugs, or other harmful materials such as bleach, lye, gas; DOWNED OR DAMAGED CHIMNEYS--Approach with caution--don't use damaged chimney (it could start fire or let poisonous gases into your house; FALLEN ITEMS--beware of items tumbling off shelves when you open doors of closets and cupboards; (4) CHECK FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES--Do not eat or drink anything from open containers near shattered glass; If power is off, plan meals to use up foods that will spoil quickly or frozen foods (food in the freezer should be good for at least a couple of days; Don't light your kitchen stove if you suspect a gas leak; USE BBQ or camp stoves, outdoors only for emergency cooking; If your water is off you can drink supplies from water heaters, melted ice cubes or canned vegetables (AVOID drinking water from swimming pools or especially spas--it may have too many chemicals in it to be safe.)

Q: What are the steps to EQ safety/awareness?

A:

1. Estimate what EQ of what size are likely to occur (geology)
2. Given the EQ size we then estimate what the shaking will be (seismology)
3. Given the shaking we estimate the response of different types of buildings (EQ engineering). Only with all these steps can we take steps as society to enact bldg. codes and retrofitting programs to make our community safer.