

EARTHQUAKES EQ



Each year 12,000-14,000 earthquakes are reported; that's an average of 35 earthquakes a day.

Safety basics

When earthquakes strike a populated region, they can cause extensive property damage. Buildings and bridges can collapse, and gas, water, electric and phone service can be disrupted. Earthquakes can also cause serious injuries and fatalities. Scientists cannot predict precisely when or where one will occur. It's important to know what to do before, during, and after an earthquake:

Before A EARTHQUAKE STRIKES

Identify safe spots at home and work:

- Under sturdy tables or desks
- In structurally sound or strongly supported doorways.
- In a small room or hallway

Never take cover near windows or heavy furniture that can tip over, such as bookcases and entertainment units. Avoid poorly supported doorways, such as those with metal frames.

Have a plan

- Family members can become separated during an earthquake. Be prepared by creating a plan for how to reach one another. Establish an out-of-area contact (such as a relative or family friend) who can coordinate family members' locations and information should you become separated. Make sure children learn the phone numbers and addresses, and know the emergency plans.
- Prepare a [family disaster supplies kit](#). Families with children should have each child create their own personal pack.

During AN EARTHQUAKE

Stay Calm. The precautions you should take are determined by where you are when the earthquake begins.

- If inside, take cover using the drop, cover, and hold on technique. If you must move for safety, take only a few steps and stay there until the shaking stops.
- If outside, stay at least 10 feet away from any building from which window glass and other debris could fall. Move away from trees, streetlights, and power lines. Crouch down and cover your head.
- If in a vehicle, park in a location away from trees, wires, buildings, bridges and overpasses. Stay where you are, with your safety belt fastened, until the earthquake is over. Never stop under or on a bridge.

- If in a coastal area, move to high ground.
- If in a mountainous area, watch for and avoid falling rocks, broken roadbeds, landslides and falling debris.

After AN EARTHQUAKE

Earthquakes are dangerous, but the disasters they can trigger such as fires, floods, landslides, tsunamis (giant sea waves) and avalanches can be more devastating.

Expect aftershocks, smaller earthquakes that can occur after a major quake. Monitor radio news reports for updates and the latest emergency information. The risk of injury increases for those who go outside too soon. If you lose electricity, use a flashlight. Never use candles because of the possibility of a gas leak and the danger of fire. When authorities say the event has ended, check your home for structural damage, gas leaks, and fire. Report any problems to the appropriate authorities. Record any damage that has resulted from the quake.

GENERAL PREPAREDNESS DURING AN EQ



In a disaster, local officials and relief workers cannot reach everyone immediately. Help may not arrive for hours or days. You need to be prepared ahead of time because you won't have time to shop or search for the supplies you will need when a disaster strikes.

Safety basics

Most disasters are natural disasters, the result of some force of nature, such as tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods. Some natural disasters can be predicted, such as hurricanes and severe winter storms, while others, such as tornadoes and earthquakes, happen with little or no warning.

Some disasters are the cause of human actions, intentional or unintentional. A disaster plan will help with safety, security, and comfort. Regardless of the type disaster, there are things you can do to prepare. Contact your local [Red Cross chapter](#) or visit the [FEMA Web site](#) to make sure you are aware of the potential for natural disasters in your community. After you have identified the types of disasters that could strike where you live, create a family disaster plan. Remember to make it simple so everyone can remember the details.

- Discuss what to do in an evacuation. When told by officials, go immediately to a shelter as instructed or to the home of a family friend or relative who lives out of the area. Find out about your local shelters beforehand.
- Know evacuation routes. Pre-establish several different routes in case certain roads are blocked or closed.
- Family members can become separated during an emergency. Be prepared by creating a plan for how to reach one another. Establish an out-of-area contact (such as a relative or family friend) who can coordinate family members' locations and information should you become separated. Make sure children learn the phone numbers and addresses, and know the emergency plans.
- Quiz children every six months so they remember what to do, where to go, and whom to call in an emergency.
- Decide how to take care of pets. Pets are not allowed in places where food is served - so you will need to have a place to take your pets if you have to go to a shelter.
- Post emergency phone numbers (fire, police, ambulance, etc.) by the phone.
- Assemble a family disaster supplies kit, and keep a smaller one in the trunk of your vehicle.

*Source: FEMA, National Earthquake Information Center,
National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) USA*