

The area near the exterior walls of a building is the most dangerous place to be. Windows, facades, and architectural details are the first parts of the building to collapse. To stay away from this danger zone, stay inside if you are inside and outside if you are outside.

Do not try to run outside or to another room--severe shaking will make it difficult to move. Duck, cover, and hold--wherever you are. Doorways are no safer than elsewhere in the home. If your building actually begins to collapse, you are safest under a sturdy piece of furniture that can shield you from falling debris.

If you are

- *Indoors:* Duck, cover, and hold. If you are not near a desk or table, drop to the floor against an interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, mirrors, and tall furniture.
- *In a high-rise:* Duck, cover, and hold. Avoid windows and other hazards. Do not use elevators. Do not be surprised if sprinkler systems or fire alarm activate.
- *Outdoors:* Move to a clear area if you can safely do so; avoid power lines, trees, signs, buildings, vehicles, and other hazards.
- *Driving:* Pull over to the side of the road, stop, and set the parking brake. Avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs, and other hazards. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over. If a power line falls on the car, stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.
- *In a kitchen:* Get away from the stove, refrigerator, and cabinets with heavy objects, leaving the kitchen if necessary. Get under a table. Duck, cover, and hold.
- *In a stadium or theater:* Stay at your seat and protect your head and neck with your arms. Don't try to leave until the shaking is over. Then walk out slowly watching for anything that could fall in the aftershocks.
- *In a mall:* Move away from display shelves. Look for sturdy furniture or an interior wall. Duck, cover, and hold.

1.10.4 After the Earthquake

Once the earthquake is over, then we will have to live with its aftermath--the risk of fire, the potential lack of utilities and basic services, and the certainty of aftershocks.

1.10.4.1 FIRE PREVENTION

Earthquakes cause fires. They break gas mains, causing fires, and break water mains, impeding the fighting of fires.

Some tips for reducing the risk:

- Brace your water heater to prevent gas leaks.
- Be sure your gas appliances have flexible attachments.
- Keep a wrench near the gas main and train family members who may be home alone how to use it.
- Shut off gas only if you smell gas or hear a leak.
- If you lose power, use flashlights instead of candles.
- The flame could cause an explosion if gas is leaking, or aftershocks could knock over the candle.
- Keep a fire extinguisher braced securely to the wall, and know how to use it.

1.10.4.2 WHAT YOU WILL NEED

Maintain personal earthquake bags. Keep them where they can be reached even if your building is badly damaged. Take them with you if you evacuate. These should include:

- Medications and medical consent forms for dependents
- Emergency cash
- Copies of vital documents such as insurance policies
- Spare eyeglasses and shoes
- Snack foods, high in water and sugar
- Working flashlights, radio, and extra batteries
- Lightsticks
- Personal hygiene supplies
- Comfort items such as games, crayons, writing materials, outgrown teddy-bears (children regress under stress)
- Electrical, water, transportation, and other vital systems can be disrupted for several days after a large earthquake.
- Emergency response agencies and hospitals could be overwhelmed and unable to provide you with immediate assistance.
- Be prepared to be on your own for 72 hours or more.