



# GET READY!

## EARTHQUAKES

Throughout the United States, 45 states and territories have a moderate to high risk of an earthquake. Falling walls, flying glass, or debris cause most deaths and injuries associated with earthquakes.

### Before

- Identify safe places in your home or place of work where you will ride out an earthquake. The best protection from falling debris is under heavy furniture. When entering buildings for the first time, remember to locate the exits and look for the best place to ride out an earthquake.
- Prepare your emergency kit, including water, and keep it stored in an easily accessible location.
- Bolt bookcases, china cabinets, filing cabinets, and other tall furniture to wall studs. Anchor overhead light fixtures and heavy electronics such as televisions and computers.
- Install strong latches on cabinets and securely fasten shelves to walls.
- Strap the water heater to wall studs and bolt it to the floor.
- Keep large or heavy objects on lower shelves and store breakable items in lower cabinets with doors and latches.
- Inspect and repair electrical wiring and gas connections.
- Check for structural defects and repair cracks in your ceiling and foundation, and that your home is anchored.
- Keep toxic and flammable items securely stored in cabinets with doors and latches.
- Learn how to turn off electricity, gas, and water.

### During

- When the shaking begins, **DROP, COVER, and HOLD ON.** Move only a few steps to a nearby safe place. The best protection from falling debris is under heavy furniture. The least safe place is directly outside of a building.
- If you are inside, stay inside until the shaking stops and you're sure it is safe to exit.
- Stay away from windows, mirrors, or other glass.
- In a high-rise building, expect the fire alarms and sprinklers to go off even if there is no fire.

- If you are outside, stay clear of buildings, power lines, overpasses, and elevated expressways.
- If you are in a vehicle, pull over at a clear location and stop. Stay in the vehicle, with your seatbelt fastened until the shaking stops.

### After

- Expect aftershocks, which can occur hours or days after the initial quake.
- If you live in a coastal area, be aware of possible tsunamis. Listen to portable battery operated TV or radio for emergency updates.
- Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a hissing or blowing noise, open a window and leave the building immediately. Turn off the gas at the outside main valve, if possible, and call the gas company. Only use your phone to call the gas company if you can safely distance yourself from the odor of the gas. Remember not to use any appliance or open flame in areas where you still smell gas. Watch for fallen power lines.
- Open cabinets and doors cautiously.

