FEMA P-530
Earthquake Safety at Home

Prepare, Protect, Survive, Respond, Recover and Repair

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Project Technical Director
Written for homeowners, renters, families and anybody who travels to earthquake country

https://www.fema.gov/media-library/assets/documents/186094
Project Vision

Comprehensive national guide to earthquake safety at home
Project Vision

Include introduction on earthquake basics and region-specific facts
Identify and provide guidance for common structural (seismic) vulnerabilities

Project Vision
Address other home hazards
Project Vision

Include actionable advice on earthquake preparation, survival, response, recovery and repair.
Project Vision

Develop simple, easily digestible messages and powerful graphics

Gas Shut Off

Know where your gas shut off is located and how to turn it off. Turn valve clockwise from vertical (aligned with piping) to horizontal (perpendicular to piping) to shut off gas.

Step 2:
Shut off main breaker or pull out main fuse(s).

Step 1:
Shut off individual breakers or fuses.
Create sections in a logical order but such that they could be distributed independently after disasters.

**Project Vision**

1. **Prepare**
   - Securing Your Space, Making a Plan, and Organizing Your Disaster Supplies

2. **Protect**
   - Identifying and Addressing Your Vulnerabilities

3. **Survive**
   - Knowing What to Do During and Immediately after the Earth Shakes

4. **Respond**
   - Getting Back in Your Home - The First Few Days

5. **Recover and Repair**
   - Restarting Utilities and Repairing Damage

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**Earthquakes Across America**
- Understanding Earthquake Basics and Your Risk

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**FEMA P-530: Earthquake Safety at Home**
Primary Influencers

- California Seismic Safety Commission
  - 2005

- FEMA
  - 2005

- Earthquake County Alliance
- California Earthquake Authority
- CalOES

Earthquake Safety at Home
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- USGS
- California Earthquake Authority
Earthquakes Across America

Map of Frequency of Damaging Earthquake Shaking in the United States
Source information courtesy of the United States Geological Survey (USGS)

See Supplement: Earthquakes Across America on page 86 for more information on the plate tectonic settings that produce earthquakes throughout the United States. Digital readers can click on the areas of the map to be taken to the related sections in the Supplement.
Prepare

No cost, low cost, higher cost tasks

Plan essentials, post-event communication and reunification plan

Risk at Home!
There are many contents within a home that present a potentially significant risk to your safety during and following a major earthquake. The image below shows interior damage following the 1994 Northridge earthquake that occurred in California.

Primary Communication Safety Contact
Pick a primary communication safety contact outside of the likely affected region of strong shaking.

Disaster Supplies
Essential disaster supplies should include key items such as water, food, medical supplies, safety items, personal and comfort items to ease recovery following a major disaster.

PHOTO COURTESY OF WASS, JANNEY, ELSTHER
# Earthquake Strengthening Projects

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*“Off-the-shelf” or prescriptive solutions available*
Survive

Drop, Cover, and Hold On!

When the building begins to shake, the immediate actions to take for your safety are:

For earthquake protective actions for people with mobility disabilities, see page 57.

Graphic courtesy of Earthquake Country Alliance and Southern California Earthquake Center

HTTPS://WWW.SHAKEOUT.ORG
### Home Safety Checklist Summary

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### Wall Damage

- **OK**
- **Needs Attention**
- **Resolved**

Check interior and exterior wall finish materials, such as stucco, gypsum board, and plaster, for cracks greater than 1/4-inch wide and seven feet long. Check for bulging or buckling finish material, or detachment of finish material from the walls (finish material moves when pushed on or gaps between framing and finish material are detectable).

**IF OCCURS:**

Request a home safety evaluation (see page 74). Where none of the exterior doors is inoperable, do not occupy home until doors are made operable and the home safety evaluation has occurred. Where one or more doors remain inoperable, the home can be occupied, but damage and required repairs should be evaluated by an insurance professional or design professional (architect or engineer). This finish material damage is an indicator that repair of damage may require more than just patching and painting.

Significant cracking of wall finish materials.

Photos of damage from the Earthquake are courtesy of James Rogers, available at www.govex.org, last updated 8/2013.
Repair and Recover

Hiring a Contractor
A contractor offering to provide services should be able to provide the firm's contractor's license number. You should be able to confirm that the license is valid and current online or by phone.

Hiring an Architectural or Engineering Firm
An architectural or engineering firm offering to provide services should be able to provide the license or registration number of the architect or engineer having oversight of the work. You should be able to confirm that the license is valid and current online or by phone. If you are not working directly with the person whose name appears on the registration, you are encouraged to contact them by phone to ensure that they are knowledgeable regarding the services being provided.

Building Permits
A building permit will need to be obtained for any repair work beyond painting and similar maintenance activities.
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Questions