

Preparing for Future Earthquakes

To protect yourself, your family and your home from future earthquakes, consider taking some steps now. If you are rebuilding your home, learn about your area's local seismic building standards and safe land use codes. Many cities located near fault lines have developed codes and standards to protect property and occupants. The Red Cross and other organizations may also be able to provide safety tips that can help prepare your family in the event of future emergencies.

The Red Cross recommends the following safety tips:

- **Pick safe places in each room of your home.** A safe place may be under a heavy piece of furniture (such as a table or desk) that will protect you from falling objects and against an interior wall, away from windows or tall objects (such as bookcases) that could fall on you.
- **Practice “drop, cover and hold-on.”** Drop under a sturdy piece of furniture, hold on and protect your face and eyes by pressing your face against your arm.
- **Do not try to leave the building during an earthquake** because objects and debris can fall on you. It is safest to stay where you are until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit.
- **If you are outdoors, it is typically best to move to a clear area,** away from buildings, trees, power lines, streetlights or overpasses.
- **If you are in a vehicle, try to move to a clear area, stop and stay in the vehicle** with your seat belt on. Once the shaking has stopped, proceed cautiously and avoid bridges and ramps that may have been damaged or weakened.
- **Assemble a disaster supplies kit** that contains: a first aid kit, canned food and can opener, at least three gallons of water per person, protective clothing, battery-powered radio and flashlights (including extra batteries), essential items for children or elderly family members (medications, diapers, warm clothing, etc.).
- **Develop an emergency communication plan** and make sure all family members know how to respond after an earthquake in case family members are separated from one another during an earthquake.
- **Check for hazards in your home;** fasten heavy items such as shelves, light fixtures and water heaters securely.
- **Have an expert check your home** for deep cracks in ceilings or the foundation.