

Create a Family Disaster Plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disaster. Many families already have an emergency plan for a house fire, so making an all-hazard plan will just add a few more details. Every member of the family will have a role during an emergency, so it is important to share ideas, responsibilities and work as a team when you create your plan.

- Discuss the types of disasters that are most likely to happen. Explain what to do in each case.
- Everyone in the family should know the address and phone number of the designated meeting place. Pick two places to meet:
 - 1. Outside your home in the case of a sudden emergency, like a fire; and
 2. Outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- Pick an out-of-town or out-of-state friend to be your "family contact." After a disaster, it is often easier to call long distance than to make a local call. All family members should call this person and tell them if they are safe, and where they are to help reduce panic during an emergency.
- Discuss what to do in an evacuation and keep reference materials distributed by utilities and emergency managers with evacuation zones and routes in a designated area. Take some time to plan for your pets.

TORNADO

If you are under a tornado warning, seek shelter immediately.

- Get indoors to a pre-designated shelter area such as a basement, storm cellar or the lowest building level. If there is no basement, go to the center of an interior room on the lowest level (closet, interior hallway) away from corners, windows, doors and outside walls.
- Shutter windows and outside doors.
- If in a vehicle, trailer or mobile home, get out immediately and go to the lowest floor of a sturdy, nearby building or storm shelter.
- If unable to get indoors, lie flat in a nearby ditch or depression and cover your head with your hands. Be aware of potential flooding and flying debris.
- Never try to outrun a tornado in your vehicle. Instead, leave the vehicle immediately for safe shelter.

DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

Be aware that some earthquakes are actually foreshocks and a larger earthquake might occur. Minimize your movements to a few steps to a nearby safe place and if you are indoors, stay there until the shaking has stopped and you are sure exiting is safe.

If indoors:

- DROP to the ground; take COVER by getting under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture; and HOLD ON until the shaking stops. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building.
- Stay away from glass, windows, outside doors and walls and anything that could fall, such as lighting fixtures or furniture.
- Stay in bed if you are there when the earthquake strikes. Hold on and protect your head with a pillow, unless you are under a heavy light fixture that could fall. In that case, move to the nearest safe place.
- Use a doorway for shelter only if it is in close proximity to you and if you know it is a strongly supported, load-bearing doorway.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside. Research has shown that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave.
- Be aware that the electricity may go out or the sprinkler systems or fire alarms may turn on.
- **DO NOT** use the elevators.

If outdoors:

- Stay there.
- Move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires.
- Once in the open, stay there until the shaking stops. The greatest danger exists directly outside buildings, at exits and alongside exterior walls.

- Ground movement during an earthquake is seldom the direct cause of death or injury. Most earthquake-related casualties result from collapsing walls, flying glass and falling objects.

If in a moving vehicle:

- Stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in the vehicle.
- Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses and utility wires.
- Proceed cautiously once the earthquake has stopped.
- Avoid roads, bridges or ramps that might have been damaged by the earthquake.

If trapped under debris:

- Do not light a match.
- Do not move about or kick up dust.
- Cover your mouth with a handkerchief or clothing.
- Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you.
- Use a whistle if one is available.
- Shout only as a last resort. Shouting can cause you to inhale dangerous amounts of dust.

- TERROISM

- Create an emergency communications plan. Choose an out-of-town contact that family members can call after an incident to report on their whereabouts and condition.
- Have an emergency preparedness kit ready to take with you if asked to evacuate.
- Check on the school emergency plan of any school-aged children you may have.
- Be aware of your surroundings
- Move or leave if you feel uncomfortable or if something does not seem right.
- Take precautions when traveling. Be aware of conspicuous or unusual behavior. Do not accept packages from strangers. Do not leave luggage unattended. You should promptly report unusual behavior, suspicious or unattended packages and strange devices to the police or security personnel.
- Learn where emergency exits are located in buildings you frequent. Plan how to get out in the event of an emergency.
- If an incident occurs, listen to your local radio or television for the latest news and instructions.
- If an incident occurs near you or your home, check for injuries. Give first aid and help those who are injured.
- Check on your neighbors, especially those who are elderly or disabled.
- If asked to evacuate, secure your home and take your pets with you.
- Notify your family contact and tell them where you are going and when you expect to arrive.
- Use travel routes specified by local authorities.