

**D**

# EMERGENCY SUPPLIES CHECKLIST



DATE COMPLETED

ACTIVITY

\_\_\_\_\_ Practice with and obtain signaling devices which  
\_\_\_\_\_ you can operate independently.

\_\_\_\_\_ Obtain and store Fire Extinguishers

\_\_\_\_\_ Bedside Emergency Supply Kit Assembled

- signal device
- shoes, flashlight and work gloves
- radio
- phone
- emergency documents
- medications and prescriptions
- bottled water
- assistive aids
- harness for service animals

\_\_\_\_\_ Home/Evacuation Emergency Supply Kit Assembled

- water
- food
- first aid kit
- sanitation supplies
- clothing and bedding
- tools and supplies
- other bedside kit supplies
- large flashlight, radio, batteries, and bulb
- fire extinguisher
- cash
- stress relievers

\_\_\_\_\_ Workplace Emergency Supply Kit Assembled

- emergency documents
- small first aid kit
- bottled water
- food and matches
- medications and prescriptions
- flashlights, batteries and bulb
- radio and batteries
- signaling device/signal flare
- cash

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- clothes, work boots, gloves
- blanket
- tools
- personal hygiene supplies toiletries
- towelettes (pre-moistened)

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Car Emergency Supply Kit Assembled

- keep gasoline tank half full
- fire extinguisher
- flares
- short rubber hose for siphoning gas
- local street map
- emergency documents
- small first aid kit
- bottled water
- food and matches
- medications
- flashlights, batteries and bulb
- radio and batteries
- signaling device/signal flare
- cash
- clothes, work boots, gloves
- blanket
- tools
- personal hygiene supplies and toiletries
- towelettes (pre-moistened)

Check emergency supply kits twice a year for freshness and stability.

## VII. EARTHQUAKE PLANNING

### Creating an Evacuation Plan (Floor Plan)

- Determine several ways to exit when you are without elevators. Use these alternate exits periodically so they will be familiar to you in an emergency.
- Plot two escape routes from each room. Be realistic about what you will do if you are alone and what you might be able to do if you have assistance.
- Create a floor plan that uses symbols to indicate the locations of:
  - fire extinguishers
  - assistive devices
  - supplies: emergency kits (bedside and evacuation)
  - utility shut-offs
  - smoke detectors
  - exits (regular and emergency), doors, windows
  - reunion/meeting location outside building
  - location of closest pay phone

Use a colored pen to draw a broken line charting at least two escape routes from each room.

Post copies of your floor plan in bedrooms and other conspicuous places around your home and give copies to your personal support network. Keep floor plans updated as conditions change.

### Evacuation Tips

- Select two meeting places: 1) a location immediately outside your home; and 2) a place outside your neighborhood where you could temporarily relocate in case you cannot return home. Record these meeting places in your emergency documents and carry them in your wallet and emergency supply kits.
- Leave a note on the inside of the front door indicating the time you left, where you have gone and a telephone number where you can be reached. If possible, also leave information with out of town contacts.
- Unplug electrical appliances so that if there is a gas leak and the electricity comes back on, there will not be a spark.

- If you live in a large condominium or an apartment complex, ask the manager what emergency plan exists and who has access to the utility shut-offs. If no plan exists, consider taking the lead in creating the plan.
- If you live below a large dam, find out if you are in the dam's inundation path. This means that there is a possibility that after an earthquake you may be evacuated as a precaution.

## Family/Household Plan

In developing a family or household plan, the family is not limited to the traditional mother, father, and children. It could be a "family" of roommates, friends, neighbors, partner, lover, or other residents of your apartment building or condominium. If you are single, create a "family" or personal support network for disaster planning and assistance.

Think about these scenarios. What will you do if an earthquake strikes when you are at work, at school, in a high-rise building, on the freeway, at the market, at a football game, or in a theater?

If you choose to leave your home, where do you intend to go and how do you intend to get there?

What if you're out of town? How will you reunite?

- Determine "safe spots" in each room and conversely, the "danger zones." Make a list so you can discuss these spots with everyone.
- Teach everyone the locations of and how to use fire extinguishers.
- Select a place outside to meet after the shaking stops.
- Check to see if the planned exits are clear, and if they may become blocked in an earthquake. If possible, periodically use alternate escape routes from your home and work place. Make sure your service animal also practices using these exits with you.
- Practice exiting and meeting at the designated spot outside.

## Utility Shut-off

Teach everyone how and when to turn off the water, gas, and electricity at the main switches. Store a wrench in an easy to locate place to shut off the gas.

Water shut-off usually requires no tools. It is important to know the location which should be just inside or outside the building on the supply line. If you cannot find it, there is a shut-off in the small concrete vault which contains your water meter in the street or sidewalk in front of your home. You will need a special tool (available at hardware stores) called a water key. The shut-off operates in the same way as the one for gas. To close the valve, turn the protruding rectangular system 90 degrees so that it is clockwise to the pipe.

If you have questions about the location or operation of any of the shut-offs, call your public utility and ask for assistance. In some areas the gas company will come out if you explain you have a disability. They will take you through the procedure so you can determine if you will be able to independently shut off that gas. Double check this in your area.

The next time the gas person comes to your home, ask to have the gas valve checked to make sure it is not "frozen." This sometimes happens when the valve has not been shut off for many years.

### **Child Care Centers and Schools**

California law requires state-licensed child care facilities to develop and maintain a Disaster and Mass Casualty Plan. This plan needs to be developed with staff and parent input. Make sure you know what the plan is.

Schools should have a plan for dealing with quakes and you should know what the plan is. Do not accept the school's assurance about its planning; ask questions about:

- Staff training and responsibilities.
- Stored emergency supplies (school should also have disaster supplies on site) and their location.
- Whether or not school buildings have been made earthquake safe.
- Policy regarding releasing students after a disaster.

### **Relocating (Buying or Renting a New Home)**

Find out the earthquake potential for where you want to live. Know the kind of soil your future home is built on. If you find your home is in both an active zone and an unstable geologic area (particularly if it is built on fill or other sandy soil prone to liquefaction during a quake), or if you are thinking of buying in such an area, consider consulting a geotechnical (soil) or foundation engineer about the risks involved. Ask the engineer, "What would you do if you were buying or renting this home for yourself?"

It's always prudent to check geologic maps before buying a house or moving to a new area. Maps showing predicted seismic intensity and other earth dangers (landslide or flood hazard zones) are available in many areas. Write to the nearest Public Inquiries Office of the U.S. Geological Survey at either:

169 Federal Building, 1961 Stout St., Denver, CO 80294  
or  
345 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park, CA 94025

## **Work Plan**

Check your disaster plan at work. If one does not exist, initiate a process. Do not wait for an employer to do so.

Make sure that your personal support network knows how to operate emergency escape devices such as an evacuation chair.

Make sure your personal support network knows where you keep your emergency supplies.

## **Traveling**

When staying in hotels/motels, identify yourself to Registration Desk staff as a person who will need assistance in an emergency and state the type of assistance you may need.

Check exit routes on the back of hotel/motel rooms and familiarize yourself with the exits. Maps may be confusing if you haven't checked out exits physically.

## **Sharpen Your Emergency Skills**

Consider sharpening your emergency skills by taking courses in emergency preparedness, available in many communities from the American Red Cross and other disaster response organizations.

## **Practicing Plans**

Practicing helps identify problems or holes in our plans. It also helps you react immediately and automatically, without panic.

## Why Conduct Drills?

- Plans have to be tested. A plan is only as good as its test results.
- Practice helps you learn protective actions in each room ensuring that you do not waste precious seconds when the ground starts shaking.
- Practice helps you know what to do immediately. If you have repeatedly conducted drills and have actually done what you would physically do in an earthquake, your reactions will be faster in a real quake.
- Practice helps to ensure that people know their roles in response and evacuation.
- Practice highlights areas of difficulty that need improvement.
- Practice builds confidence in abilities to do what is called for.

## Guidelines for Conducting Drills

Emergency procedures should be reviewed frequently (mental drills) and practiced (physical drills) at least two times each year in each job setting, home, school, volunteer site, etc. Conduct mental, physical, and neighborhood drills to maintain familiarity with your plans. Mental drills can be conducted more frequently than physical ones because less work is involved.

### Mental Drills

You can practice mental drills by thinking about what you would do and then discussing your proposed actions. For example, think through and discuss how you would deal with the situations below, as well as those under the physical drill section.

*Your family is separated during the course of a regular day. You are at work or volunteering, your children are in school. Your spouse (partner or roommate) is at work. How do you reunite? What do you do?*

*Your house is so badly damaged that it is unsafe for occupancy. You must not stay in the house but could "camp out" in your yard or nearby area of safe shelter. What do you do?*

*It sounds like the shelter is accessible, but how would you get there?*

*Your house and the entire neighborhood has been declared unsafe and you must relocate a distance from home for a period of approximately 2 to 3 weeks. What do you take with you?*



*You are a wheelchair user who just experienced the quake. The phone system isn't working. Your athletic trophies fall off the shelf, bounced off the bed and are blocking the doorway. You can see that the ramp is dislodged from the front door. What do you do?*

### **Physical Drills**

- Conduct drills in each room of each setting where you spend a significant amount of time and identify protective actions.
- Make drills as realistic as possible by simulating obstacle courses.
- Physically do what you expect to do in an earthquake. Practice taking cover as if an earthquake were taking place. If getting on the floor and covering your head is the thing you would do, then do so.
- Practice letting people know quickly, concisely and specifically anything they may need to know about your disability in terms of evacuating you safely.
- Practice evacuation.
- Practice using alternate escape routes.
- Practice drills with your personal support network so each person will know how to access you in the building and how to assist you in getting out of the building.
- Practice exiting and meeting at a designated spot outside.
- Practice getting to the shut-off valves for gas, power and water or mobilizing, if needed, your personal support network to assist with these important tasks. Practice turning off the electricity and water. Be sure everyone can do this quickly. **DO NOT TURN OFF THE GAS**, just know how. (Once gas is turned off, for safety reasons only your gas company should turn it back on.) You can, however, practice using the shut-offs for water and electricity without special training.
- Practice cooking and cleaning up without any utilities, including lights. Use as little fuel and water as possible. Use the six-month replacement dates from your supplies as a reason to practice. If you have children, make it part of an "earthquake game."

### **How to Start a Drill**

- Start when someone calls out "earthquake."

- Everyone must stop what they are doing and participate.

Read a description of an earthquake and the structural and non-structural damages that have resulted.

Here are several descriptions you can use or modify. What would you do if you found yourself in these situations?

*You are in the kitchen and suddenly the earth starts to shake gently, then more violently, then subsides, then it starts again even more violently. The earth is jumping up and down like a great piston. It is like being in a ship, tossed in an awful and violent storm. Cupboard doors fly open, dishes and glassware fall, the refrigerator door opens and the contents spill, the refrigerator slides across the room and overturns, ceiling tiles and fixtures fall, then it stops!*

*You are in the bedroom. Suddenly, what seems like gigantic energy starts to violently shake, rattle, and roll. You see plaster cracking and falling, pictures and windows breaking, tall furniture and lamps overturning, hanging plants and lights swaying and then falling. It is dark, it is dusty. You have been thrown on a bed. The route out of the bedroom is blocked. Broken glass is everywhere. The door is jammed.*

*Water, power, telephone, and natural gas services have been severely damaged, leaving your area without utilities for 3 weeks. Police, fire, paramedic and hospital personnel are overwhelmed and no longer able to respond to even the most severe emergency. Transportation is at a standstill.*

*You live alone on the third floor and must use the elevator to enter and exit your unit. You are trapped indoors with an inoperable elevator, no radio or television. What do you do?*

*First you feel a tremendous jolt. The entire structure is vibrating and the noise and the shaking and the rattling and the grinding seem to go on and on and on! The earth seems to be groaning. It finally subsides. The stillness is thick and eerie. You are at work; you sit motionless as the ceiling in your high-rise, 12th floor office begins to fall. Everything is dark, there is no longer the sound of other people moving about; apparently everyone else has left. You are alone. Telephones and elevators are inoperable. A pipe burst and water is spraying all around you. You are stranded. Eventually you hear sirens roaring, ambulances and fire engines rushing by, but never stopping. What do you do?*

*Your home has broken windows, fallen plaster, minor roof damage, toppled bricks. None of the utilities are working, but you can stay at home. What do you do?*

## **Evaluating Drills**

Evaluate your drill performance by answering the following questions:

What did people do or what would they do during the quake to avoid injury?

Were responsibilities carried out during and after the quake?

Were planned exits clear or could they become blocked in an earthquake?

Were there safety hazards encountered that could easily be reduced or eliminated?

Were injured people evacuated properly?

Were there communication breakdowns?

Were supplies in one place and easy to collect during the evacuation process?

Were damaged utilities shut off promptly?



## EARTHQUAKE PLANNING CHECKLIST

**DATE COMPLETED**

**ACTIVITY**

- |       |   |
|-------|---|
| _____ | Create an Evacuation Plan (Floor Plan)                                  |
| _____ | Develop a Family or Household Plan                                      |
| _____ | Check disaster plan at work; if one does not exist, initiate a process. |
| _____ | Practice plans, conduct and evaluate physical and mental drills.        |

## VIII. PRACTICE ASSERTIVENESS

Practice and apply your assertiveness, self-advocacy, and problem-solving skills in earthquake situations. The situations portrayed below are based on actual past post-quake occurrences.

### Practicum Situations

#### Visual Disability:

*You are blind and your partner has very limited vision. After what seemed like a long harrowing walk, negotiating your way around streets strewn with debris from fallen walls and broken glass, you finally arrive at a shelter, pretty shaken. To make things worse, both your guide dogs seem neurotic, panicky, and often just start shaking uncontrollably. The shelter administrator will not permit you to bring in your service animals. "No animals allowed, strict rule." He tells you to put your dogs in a kennel and come back. He explains to you that you can look up the number of a kennel in the white pages. What do you do?*

#### Hearing disability:

*You are deaf and a wheelchair user. A large bookcase hit your head hard during the quake. You have a headache and are dizzy. You finally get to a medical center for assistance and find that there is only a motor home with steps and there are no interpreters. What do you do?*

*You finally get to a health center and there are no interpreters. What do you do?*

*You are in a shelter and you are deaf. There is no TTY. All announcements are verbal. You know this because once an hour all activity seems to stop and people appear to be listening to something. What do you do?*

#### Wheelchair users:

*You arrive at a shelter and you are told that because you use a wheelchair you will have to go to another shelter, but your family can stay at that shelter. What do you do?*

*You finally find a shelter three miles from your damaged home. The reception, because you are a wheelchair user is, "Sorry, we are not able to serve you here. Try the hospital." You transfer independently. You have no need for medical services, but the greeting is and remains, "Sorry, we are not able to serve you here." What do you do?*

*You are turned away from a local shelter because you are unable to transfer independently from your wheelchair. What do you do?*

**Mobility Disability:**

*You live alone on the third floor and must use the elevator to enter and exit your unit. You are trapped indoors with an inoperable elevator, no radio or television. What do you do?*

*You arrive at a food and water distribution center, which is up six steps, and the line literally goes on for blocks. What do you do?*

*Due to your disability, you are denied admission to the shelter because the shelter administrator thinks you are drunk and he is having difficulty understanding your speech. What do you do?*

*You apply for FEMA emergency housing assistance because you can no longer use your building. You live on the fourth floor of an elevator building and the elevator no longer works. You must have elevator access. FEMA tells you that you are not eligible for assistance because your building is green-tagged (inspected and found safe to live in). What do you do?*

*You finally get into a very large shelter after a very long wait. You have been there a few hours and need to go to the toilet. There are 15 portable toilets lined up. You need an accessible toilet but there are none. What do you do?*

*You finally get admitted to a shelter. You have been there a few hours and decide you need to go to the rest room. You have mobility disability with a very limited ability to negotiate distance. You see a sign that says, "To bathrooms, two blocks" and an arrow pointing east. What do you do?*

*You receive a voucher for an accessible hotel. The hotel is three miles away. The disaster assistance center asks you to come back every day to get another voucher. What do you do?*

**Learning, cognitive, motor disability:**

*You are at a disaster assistance center and you are handed a form to fill out in order to qualify for financial assistance. You ask the worker to assist you in writing since you are not able to write because of your disability. The worker says that they will be able to assist you but probably at the end of the day, around 6 p.m. It is only 8 a.m. What do you do?*

**Generic disability situations:**

*You finally find a shelter three miles from your damaged home. Because of your disability, the reception is "Sorry, we are not able to serve you here. Try the hospital." What do you do?*

*The application form for the shelter requires you to identify your "medical problems." What do you do?*

*The shelter is providing volunteer transportation for residents to and from their homes to retrieve mail. You are told that because of your disability you are not eligible for this service because of liability issues. What do you do?*

## IX. DURING AN EARTHQUAKE - True/False Quiz

1. \_\_\_ Wait until you know for sure that it is the "big one" before taking cover.
2. \_\_\_ During an earthquake, get in a doorway.
3. \_\_\_ You should run outside.
4. \_\_\_ Move away from glass doors, mirrors, and windows.
5. \_\_\_ If you're in the kitchen, move away from the refrigerator, stove, and overhead cupboards.
6. \_\_\_ If you are in a crowded place, rush to an exit.
7. \_\_\_ If you are in a store, move away from display shelves containing objects that can fall.
8. \_\_\_ If you are in your car during a quake, drive through stop lights and warn everyone to take cover.
9. \_\_\_ If you are in your vehicle, when it is safe, pull under an overpass for protection and stop.
10. \_\_\_ In a high-rise building you should stay away from windows, stay in the building on the same floor, and avoid using the elevators.
11. \_\_\_ If you're in a high-rise building and not near a desk or table, move against an interior wall and protect your head with your arms.
12. \_\_\_ If you are outside, the area surrounding any building is extremely hazardous because of falling objects.
13. \_\_\_ If you are outside, move away from the sides of buildings, overhead wires, high buildings, walls, lamp posts, chimneys, antennas, and other hazards.
14. \_\_\_ If you are on the sidewalk near a building, duck into a doorway to protect yourself from falling bricks, glass, plaster, and other debris.
15. \_\_\_ If outside, watch for falling items like real estate prices.
16. \_\_\_ Whatever you do, panic. The world can always use more fear, chaos, and violence.
17. \_\_\_ Emergency response people will be able to get to you quickly and assist you after a catastrophic quake.



## Quiz Answers

1. **Wait until you know for sure it is the "big one" before taking cover.**

...FALSE

By that time, it may be too late. Immediately take cover.

During a quake duck, cover and hold.

If you can't duck or cover, just hold.

If you can't duck or hold, just cover.

If you are not under cover or cannot get under cover, grab anything handy (coat, blanket, newspaper, clothes, cardboard box, etc.) to shield your head and face from falling debris and splintering glass.

If using a wheelchair, lock the brakes. Protect your head, neck, and chest by using a pillow, blanket, book, or any similar item to shield you from falling objects or other debris.

If you can, sit in a hallway with your back against one wall and your feet against the other or stay in an inside corner. Stay away from glass and heavy objects which could fall.

If you cannot move, stay where you are or sit down until the shaking stops.

2. **During an earthquake, get in a doorway.**

...FALSE

This is old information. People have often gotten hurt by doors that swing and hit them.

Safe spots include under supported archways, against interior walls away from windows, or under a heavy piece of furniture like a desk or sturdy table.

3. **You should run outside.**

...FALSE

Stay inside. In one earthquake, a young girl ran outside of a parking structure and was killed by falling concrete. A man tried to get out of a window and fell two stories. Others have been hurt by flying debris which may fall as far away from the building as the building is tall.

4. **Move away from glass doors, mirrors and windows.**

...TRUE

Also avoid heavy standing objects such as bookcases, china cabinets, refrigerators, filing cabinets, hanging plants, etc.

If you are in a shower or tub, drop to the bottom to avoid slipping, cover head, face and neck (use towel, shower curtain, bath rug, hands, etc.), turn off water, pull the tub plug.

If you live in a large condominium or an apartment, go to the corridors or stairwells. They offer no protection from falling ceiling fixtures, but they may be filled with other people trying to flee. You probably will not be able to walk, wheel or stand during strong shaking.

Wait a few seconds after the shaking stops before leaving your cover.

During an earthquake, the intensity of the shaking may fluctuate. Therefore, you should wait a few seconds before leaving cover.

If you are in bed, hang on, cover your head, and stay put, but in some situations it may be safer to get on the floor. If you are in bed and are unable to get up, stay in bed. Use your arms, blankets, pillows, books, lap robes, or any sturdy object you can move over you to protect your head and body.

5. **If you're in the kitchen, move away from the refrigerator, stove, and overhead cupboards.**  
...TRUE  
Move towards hallways, archways, or under sturdy tables.
6. **If you are in a crowded place, rush to an exit.**  
...FALSE  
If you are in a crowded place such as a theater, stadium, or store, do not rush for the exits because hundreds of others may be doing the same thing.
7. **If you are in a store, move away from display shelves containing objects that can fall.**  
...TRUE  
Move towards outer walls or corners of store, away from windows.
8. **If you are in your car during a quake, drive through stop lights and warn everyone to take cover.**  
...FALSE
9. **If you are in your vehicle, when it is safe, pull under an overpass for protection and stop.**  
...FALSE  
As soon as it is safe, pull over, stop away from overpasses, underpasses, power lines, large signs, trees, or other hazards. Stay in the vehicle and keep your seatbelt fastened. Your vehicle is a safe shell in which to ride out an earthquake. It is an excellent shock absorber and will bounce on its springs during a quake.

10. **In a high-rise building you should stay away from windows, stay in the building on the same floor and avoid using the elevators.**  
...TRUE  
The elevator power may go off.
11. **If you're in a high-rise building and not near a desk or table, move against an interior wall and protect your head with your arms.**  
...TRUE  
Inside walls are generally stable and held up by both sides and the ceiling and they don't have the capacity to fall off as easily. Do not be surprised if the fire alarms or sprinkler systems come on.
12. **If you are outside, the area surrounding any building is extremely hazardous because of falling objects.**  
...TRUE
13. **If you are outside, move away from the sides of buildings, overhead wires, high buildings, walls, lamp posts, chimneys, antennas, and other hazards.**  
...TRUE
14. **If you are on the sidewalk near a building, duck into a doorway to protect yourself from falling bricks, glass, plaster, and other debris.**  
...TRUE
15. **If outside, watch for falling items like real estate prices.**  
...FALSE
16. **Whatever you do, panic. The world can always use some more fear, chaos, and violence.**  
...FALSE
17. **Emergency response people will be able to get to you quickly and assist you after a catastrophic quake.**  
...FALSE

## X. AFTER THE SHAKING STOPS

### Immediate:

- Take a deep breath, evaluate your situation and surroundings.
- Do not light a match or turn on a light switch.
- Put on sturdy shoes and gloves. You cannot afford cut hands or feet.
- Signal for help if needed by using a phone (if working) or use a signaling device (an item you can operate independently such as a whistle, beeper, bell, wrench for tapping on a wall, floor or window, flashlight, strobe light, siren, alarm, other noisemaker). Use any method you can to attract attention. If you are okay, use your pre-planned signal to let your support network know you are okay.
- Check for injuries and apply first aid. Treat only life-threatening injuries, leave minor injuries until after you have checked for fire and other hazards. Do not move anyone who is seriously injured unless they are in danger.
- If you find fires, extinguish them, if possible. Otherwise contain them by closing doors. Collect people and leave. Do not waste time gathering belongings. Lives are more precious than belongings, don't take chances.
- Turn on battery-operated radio or TV and tune to the Emergency Broadcast System for information and instructions.
- If you smell gas or hear a hissing sound, open windows, turn off the gas at the main gas meter, and leave the building using your pre-planned evacuation routes.
- Expect aftershocks.
- Do not use elevator (power may go off without notice).
- If you have pets, particularly a service animal, keep them confined or securely harnessed. Animals become frightened and may run away.
- Gather emergency supplies to evacuate, if it becomes necessary.
- If you are alone or cannot get out of the area, remember your preparedness planning. Members of your personal support network should be coming to help you. Do whatever you can to help yourself until help arrives.

- Avoid places where you can become easily trapped or go unnoticed by rescue personnel.
- After you have your own situation in hand, check on your neighbors and on others.
- If you have a respiratory or cardiac condition, make a mask from a towel or other material to filter your air supply.
- Clean up potentially harmful material.
- Use your emergency supplies wisely. Do not use toilets or plumbing if you do not think sewer lines are functioning properly. An indication of this would be if there is spillage inside or outside of your building.
- Be prepared for aftershocks, they will occur. They can cause further damage.

**Evaluate your resources:**

- Check water supply and take necessary steps, if needed.
- Phones: Check for dial tone only.

Do not use phones, except for genuine emergencies. Use phone only to call for assistance in an extreme emergency situations.

If you make an emergency call, you may not get a dial tone right away, so stay on the line. Dial tone delay could be as long as a minute or more. Do not repeatedly put the switch hook down. This will further delay your call. If you get a "fast busy" or "all circuits busy" recording, hang up and try your call again.

Check to see if your phone has been jarred off the hook because of excessive shaking. Often, the only reason phones are inoperable after a quake is because so many of them are off the hook. This causes the systems to go down. Therefore it is crucial that you get all your phones back on the hook as quickly as possible. If you leave the area, unplug the phones at the wall to prevent them from again being jarred off the hook during an aftershock.

**Assess the damage:**

- Check for structural damage (e.g., wall shifted or tilted, floors or roofs split/broken, chimney cracked, etc.) Check for cracks in chimneys, walls, porches and sidewalks for shifts in posts or pillars.

- Cover broken windows or large cracks in walls as best you can; put up weatherproof plastic sheeting or, for more security, boards or plywood.
- If your building appears to be severely weakened, move outside with your emergency supplies until the structure can be checked by a building inspector.

**Check your food supply:**

- If refrigerator or freezer is not working, use food from refrigerator first, then frozen food as it begins to thaw. Open the refrigerator door as seldom as possible to prolong the coolest temperature inside the refrigerator. Use canned and dried food last.
- Use barbecue or camp stove only outside and away from flammable material. Keep fire extinguisher handy in case after shocks overturn the unit.

Be prepared for aftershocks that may be as strong as the original quake. They may cause further damage. Do not replace anything that has fallen off a high shelf. Just move it out of the way. Protect surfaces of valuable furniture against after-shock damage by laying down thick newspapers topped with cardboard, plywood, or blankets.

Check closets and storage shelf areas. Open closets and cupboards very carefully. If unsecured art work made it through the first shake, take it down. Wrap breakables in blankets, put rubber bands between cabinet knobs, cover furniture. Do not put things back if they are going to fall again during an aftershock.

Be prepared to evacuate if necessary.

**If away from home:**

- Stay put until you have reliable information that indicates a safe route to use to go home. There may be a wide variety of dangerous situations occurring in the first few hours/days that represent a serious threat to the safety of those who take off without adequate information.
- If in the car, use your maps to detour around debris and congestion. If you leave your car, park it well off the roadway and take your emergency kit.
- If a power line has fallen across your car, stay in your car until rescuers arrive to help you. Stay in your vehicle because you have rubber insulation through your tires. Wait until the wire is removed before you leave your vehicle.

**In case of evacuation:**

- Leave a note on the inside of the front door indicating the time you left, where you've gone, your intended route, and a telephone number where you can be reached. Also, leave information with out of town contacts, if possible. Take as much of your emergency food and water as possible, even if you are going to a public shelter. Don't forget your disability-related emergency supplies.

**Next few hours:**

- Treat minor injuries.
- Inform out of town contact of your situation.
- Bury your waste or bag it.
- Practice strict cleanliness/hygiene: wash hands with clean water after handling waste, ask anyone assisting you to wear latex gloves available from your emergency kit, and keep hands out of mouth.
- Take "after quake" photos/videos of damaged areas before starting the clean up to combine with the "before quake" photos to provide documentation for insurance claims and IRS income tax claims.

**Finding an emergency shelter:**

- If you have to evacuate where you live you may have to use a shelter. Unfortunately, although the law requires it, many shelters are not accessible. Call the emergency/shelter information line, if possible and if one exists, to determine if there are accessible shelters. Explain what an accessibility shelter means, otherwise you very well may get an inaccurate answer.
- If you have to stay in a shelter **BE ASSERTIVE ABOUT YOUR NEEDS.** Tell shelter managers what you need to remain healthy. If you have specific health needs and there is a medical staff person at the shelter, discuss your needs with them.
- If the shelter nearest you is not accessible, ask them about options (an accessible shelter, hotel vouchers, etc.). Vouchers are not usually publicized. You need to ask for them. And remember that under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, they must provide you with services and are not allowed to turn you away because of your disability or your service animal.