



## EARTHQUAKES



Earthquakes strike suddenly and without warning. They can occur at any time of the year, day or night. Long Beach and Los Angeles County are at moderate to very high risk of earthquakes. Though earthquakes cannot be predicted, there are steps you can take to prepare your home and your family for an earthquake.

City staff and relief workers will be on scene after a disaster, but cannot reach everyone immediately. Basic services such as electricity, water, gas or sewage treatment may be cut off for an extended period of time. You need to be prepared to survive on your own for at least five days after an emergency. One tool to ensure your family's well-being is to prepare a kit with emergency supplies to last a minimum of five days.

### 1) Before an earthquake occurs

You can take the following steps to create a safety plan for you and your family.

- Become aware of fire evacuation and earthquake plans for all of the buildings you occupy regularly.
- Pick safe places in each room of your home, workplace and/or school. A safe place could be under a piece of furniture or against an interior wall away from windows, bookcases or tall furniture that could fall on you.
- Practice “drop, cover and hold on” in each location you have selected as your safe place. If you do not have sturdy furniture to hold on to, sit on the floor next to an interior wall and cover your head and neck with your arms.
- Keep a flashlight and sturdy shoes by each person's bed in case the earthquake strikes in the middle of the night.
- Bolt and brace water heaters and gas appliances to wall studs.
- Bolt bookcases, china cabinets and other tall furniture to wall studs.
- Hang heavy items, such as pictures and mirrors, away from beds, couches and anywhere people sleep or sit.
- Install strong latches or bolts on cabinets. Large or heavy items should be closest to the floor.
- Learn how to shut off your utility connections. Find the gas as well as water valves in your home and keep a wrench handy for that purpose. Find the power panel and make sure each breaker is labeled.
- Keep and maintain an emergency supplies kit in an easy-to-access location

## 2) If You Are Inside When the Shaking Starts...

- “Drop, cover and hold on”. Move as little as possible.
- If you are in bed, stay there, curl up and hold on. Protect your head with a pillow.
- Stay away from windows to avoid being injured by shattered glass.
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit. When it is safe to exit, use stairs rather than the elevator in case there are aftershocks, power outages or other damage.
- Be aware that fire alarms and sprinkler systems frequently go off in buildings during an earthquake, even if there is no fire.



## 3) If You Are Outside When the Shaking Starts...

- Find a clear spot (away from buildings, power lines, trees, streetlights) and drop to the ground. Stay there until the shaking stops.
- If you are in a vehicle, pull over to a clear location and stop. Avoid bridges, overpasses and power lines if possible. Stay inside with your seatbelt fastened until the shaking stops. Then, drive carefully, avoiding bridges and ramps that may have been damaged.
- If a power line falls on your vehicle, do not get out. Wait for assistance.
- If you are in a mountainous area or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for falling rocks and other debris.

## 4) After the Shaking Stops, Take the Appropriate Steps to Stay Safe

After an earthquake, dangerous conditions may persist.

- Expect and prepare for potential aftershocks or even a tsunami.
- Each time you feel an aftershock, “drop, cover and hold on”.
- Check yourself for injuries and get First Aid, if necessary, before helping injured or trapped persons.
- Put on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes and work gloves to protect against injury from broken objects.
- Look quickly for damage in and around your home and get everyone out if your home is unsafe.
- Listen to a portable, battery-operated or hand-crank radio for updated emergency information and instructions. In an emergency KKJZ 88.1 FM will broadcast information to the community.
- Check the telephones in your home or workplace to see if you can get a dial tone. Make brief calls to report life-threatening emergencies.
- Look for and extinguish small fires. Fire is the most common hazard after an earthquake.
- Clean up spilled medications, bleach, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately.
- Open closet and cabinet doors carefully as contents may have shifted.
- Help people who require special assistance (such as infants, children, disabled and seniors)
- Watch out for fallen power lines and stay out of damaged areas. If you smell gas, turn off the main valve by the meter.
- Keep animals under your direct control.
- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- If you were away from home, return only when authorities say it is safe to do so. Use extreme caution and examine walls, floors, doors, staircases and windows to check for damage.
- **Let Your Family Know You Are Safe.**



For additional information on emergency preparedness, please visit any of the following on-line resources:

**City of Long Beach:**

Fire Department

[http://www.longbeach.gov/fire/emergency\\_prep/default.asp](http://www.longbeach.gov/fire/emergency_prep/default.asp)

Police Department

<http://www.longbeach.gov/police/default.asp>

Health and Human Services

<http://www.longbeach.gov/civica/filebank/blobdload.asp?BlobID=9067>

**County Agency:**

Los Angeles County Office of Emergency Management

<http://www.lacoa.org/>

**State Agency:**

The Governor's Office of Emergency Services

<http://www.oes.ca.gov/>

**Federal Agency:**

Federal Emergency Management Agency

<http://www.fema.gov/>

Department of Homeland Security

<http://www.dhs.gov/index.shtm>

U.S. Geological Survey – Specific earthquake information and maps.

<http://www.usgs.gov/>

**City of Long Beach Emergency Phone Numbers:**

**Emergencies Dial 911**

- Gas Department: 562.570.2140
- Water and Sewer: 562.570.2390
- Public Works: 562.570.2700
- Police Non-Emergency 562.435.6711
- Fire Non-Emergency 562.570.9400

**Social Media:**

You can also sign up for any of the City of Long Beach social media accounts and receive updates on the City's disaster responses, as well as information to assist you.

[www.facebook.com/CityofLongBeachCA](http://www.facebook.com/CityofLongBeachCA)

<https://twitter.com/LongBeachCity>

[www.youtube.com/user/LongBeachCityCA](http://www.youtube.com/user/LongBeachCityCA)

