

Earthquake Safety

According to the US Geological Survey, there is a 60% chance that a 6.7 magnitude or greater earthquake will occur in California in the next 30 years. An earthquake of this size can pose an immediate hazard to worker safety, strain public services and disrupt business. The best way to survive an earthquake, or any other emergency, safely is to ***Prepare, Plan, and Practice.***

First, prepare your workplace for an earthquake. Large equipment and machines need to be secured properly so they will not fall over in an earthquake. Tall furniture such as bookshelves, storage racks and shelving should be strapped or attached to the wall to keep it stable and upright. Survey your workspace to make sure that heavy items are stored at lower heights or secured so they won't fall. Photos and pictures should be hung onto the wall with screws or earthquake "j" clips. Keep all fire extinguishers unobstructed at all times. Keep all doors, exits, corridors and passageways unobstructed at all times for quick access evacuations. Keep areas under desks and tables uncluttered to make room to take cover in an earthquake.

Gather emergency supplies for the workplace. Keep flashlights, a radio, extra batteries, and a first aid kit on hand at all times. Consider stockpiling food, water, blankets, and sanitary supplies such as toilet paper and portable toilets. Prepare personal emergency supplies for your desk and your car, including comfortable clothes and shoes, a flashlight and batteries, first aid kit, food, water, and necessary medications.

Make sure you are familiar with your emergency evacuation plan that details how employees will evacuate from the building, where they will meet, how to account for everyone, and how to get further instructions to act. Current emergency contact phone numbers for all employees and management are critical in an emergency.

Workers should have family emergency plans in place at home in case their family is stranded after an earthquake. Keep enough emergency supplies on hand to maintain your family for at least 3 days. Make lists of emergency contact phone numbers and determine a meeting place for the family after an emergency.

Finally, practice and train on your emergency procedures. Practice emergency evacuations. Get training on first aid and CPR techniques.

In case of an earthquake:

- If indoors:
 - Do not run outside;
 - Duck or drop down on the floor;
 - Take cover under a sturdy desk or table and hold on to it so that you can move with it during the shaking;
 - If you cannot take cover, stand against an interior wall, in a corner or in a doorway, and protect your head and neck with your arms.
 - Stay away from windows – shattered pieces of glass can fall down on you.
- If outdoors:
 - Get into an open area away from trees, building, walls, and power lines.
- If driving:
 - Pull to the side of the road and stop;
 - Avoid overpasses and power lines;
 - Remain in vehicle until shaking stops.
- Once the shaking stops:
 - Assess damage and administer first aid;
 - Do not attempt to call emergency personnel unless essential.

Remember to ***Duck, Cover and Hold*** in an earthquake. Earthquakes aren't planned, but YOU can plan and practice to survive.

When we share the responsibility for safety in the workplace, everyone wins!!