

## **EARTHQUAKES**

### *Before the earthquake*

- Assess your home's vulnerability to earthquakes, especially if you live near a fault line. You can obtain fault zone, maps from your city or county planning department or check with your independent insurance agent for further information.
- Locate a safe place in every room where you can go when an earthquake occurs. Choose a place away from windows where nothing can fall on you, preferably under a sturdy table or desk, or under an interior doorway.
- Help quake-proof your home by bolting tall furniture and the water heater to wall studs. Attach mirrors, pictures and other objects securely to the wall. Do not hang glass-framed pictures behind your bed.
- Use flexible connectors for gas-fueled appliances to prevent them from snapping.
- Install strong latches on cupboards to prevent objects from falling out.
- Make sure your house is bolted to the foundation. If you live in a mobile home, make sure it is securely anchored down. Check with your local building inspector to determine if walls need additional bracing.
- If a severe earthquake does occur, you may be asked to evacuate. Have your disaster supplies kit packed and ready to go.

### *During an earthquake*

- The shaking that occurs during an earthquake typically only lasts for a few seconds, although it may seem like an eternity. To protect yourself, remember these three words: duck, cover and hold.
- Move away from windows and exterior doors.
- Lie low and take cover, preferably under a table, desk or other safe spot. Protect yourself by curling up, if you can. Cover your head, spine and chest areas. Hold onto the furniture and be prepared to move with it.
- If you're in a high-rise building, move against an interior wall: Again, try to find a desk or table to crawl under. Do not use the elevators. Expect the fire alarms and sprinklers to go off.

- If you're in a car, pull over and stop. Avoid bridges and overpasses. Stay in the car until the shaking stops.
- If you're outdoors, find a spot away from buildings, trees and power lines. Lie on the ground.
- If you're on a sidewalk near buildings, try to duck into a doorway to protect yourself from falling glass or debris.

#### *After an earthquake*

- Be prepared for aftershocks. Although they may be smaller and less intense than the main quake, they could cause additional damage or cause tottering buildings or other structures to fall. Stay indoors until after the shaking stops and you're sure it's safe to exit.
- If no one in your house is injured, place a sign saying "all OK" on the door so emergency teams can assist those who do need help.
- Check your house carefully for chimneys or walls that might be damaged and ready to fall.
- Reposition anything in your closets and cupboards that may be damaged or ready to fall.