



What to Do AFTER an Earthquake

What To Do Immediately:

Most lives can be saved and further damage averted in the first 60 minutes following an earthquake. Perform these steps immediately:

- Check yourself for injuries**, get first aid if necessary. Then assist others. **Call 9-1-1** for life threatening injuries if the phones are working.
- Dress for safety:** sturdy shoes, leather gloves, long pants/shirt, hard hat/helmet, goggles, dust mask, etc.
- Find and extinguish small fires.** Leave yourself an escape route.
- Check for natural gas leaks.** If you smell gas or hear hissing, shut off the gas at the meter (usually outside the house) using a wrench or gas shut-off-tool. If no leaks, leave the gas on. Do not turn the gas back on by yourself. Wait for the gas company.
- Shut off electricity** at the circuit breaker if there is any damage to your electrical system (sparks, melting insulation, or frayed wires). **Do not flip any electric switches until you are sure there are no natural gas leaks.**
- Shut off water** at the water meter box to trap clean water inside your home.
- Place “Help” or “OK” sign** on your front door or window to alert your neighbors.
- Call, text, or email your out-of-area contact** to report your condition. Stay off the phone as much as possible.
- If you see downed power lines**, consider them energized and stay far away. Keep others away from them. Never touched downed power lines or any objects in contact with them.
- Check on your neighbors**, especially those with special needs or children.
- Be prepared for aftershocks.** Stay away from structurally damaged buildings, brick chimneys, walls made of bricks or blocks, and all unstable materials. Repeat the above steps after all significant aftershocks.

What To Do Later:

- Visit your local neighborhood **Emergency Communications Hub**** (Closest is currently at the Judkins P-Patch) for updated information, to report serious problems, share resources and information, and volunteer to help others in your neighborhood.
- Information concerning the welfare of separated family members will be handled by the Red Cross. Do not call or go to the police or fire department for this information.
- Put your fire extinguisher** in front of your house so that others can use it if necessary.
- Locate important items** during daylight such as flashlights, batteries, money, ID, warm clothing, etc.



- Stay off the roads** unless you have a genuine emergency. Keep streets clear for emergency vehicles.
- Listen to a portable AM/FM radio** for official information. Keep your neighbors informed.
- Be prepared to evacuate with your go-kit.** If your home has sustained structural damage or is uninhabitable, seek out the nearest shelter or stay with family/friends. Shelters may be overcrowded and initially lack basic services. Some shelters may not accept pets. Do not leave your home just because the utilities are out of service or your home has suffered a small amount of damage.
- If you need to evacuate** to a shelter, take the following items with you, if possible:
 - Personal disaster supplies (go-kit) including medications and eyewear
 - Supply of food, water, snacks
 - Sleeping bag/blanket/pillow
 - Change of clothing, jacket
 - Towel and washcloth
 - Personal ID, copies of household and health insurance information
 - Smartphone/charger/headphones
 - Cash (small bills)
 - Do not take large quantities of unnecessary clothing or personal items.
 - If you evacuate, leave a note telling relatives/neighbors where you can be found.
- Unplug broken lights and appliances.** They could start a fire when electricity is restored.
- Never use indoors:** camp stoves, gas lanterns or heaters, gas or charcoal grills, or gas generators.
- Clean up any spills.** Harmful materials such as bleach, gasoline, or chemicals should be covered with an absorbent such as dirt or cat litter. Use extreme caution and keep windows open for ventilation.
- Inspect your home for structural damage.** Look for cracks and other damage to the roof, chimneys, and foundation. Stay away from chimneys and walls made of brick or blocks. They could topple during aftershocks. Don't use a fireplace with a damaged chimney.
- If power is off,** plan meals to use up refrigerated and frozen foods first. If you keep the door closed, food in your freezer may be good for a couple of days.
- If your water is off** or unsafe, you can drink from water heaters, melted ice cubes, or canned vegetables. To disinfect water, add 2 drops of plain bleach to 1 liter or 1 quart of water. Wait 30 min.

When The Situation Stabilizes:

- Take pictures of your damaged house and property to help with insurance claims.
- Contact your insurance agent to begin your claims process. My policy number and insurance company is: _____
- Contact FEMA to find out about financial assistance by visiting www.fema.gov/assistance.