

# PERSONAL EARTHQUAKE SAFETY

## **When the Ground is Shaking – How Do You Protect Yourself?**

**Note:** Panic causes more injuries than earthquakes.

### **In the Kitchen:**

Drop, cover, and hold on. Glasses and dishes will be falling and breaking on the floor, so protect your face. Turn off all gas and electric cooking appliances. Stay inside until the shaking stops.

### **In the Bedroom:**

Stay in bed and cover your head with a pillow. Keep curtains drawn so breaking glass will not fall on you. Protect your feet from broken glass. Keep shoes and a flashlight tied to your bed. Stay inside until the shaking stops.

### **At the Office:**

Drop, cover, and hold on. Do not use elevators. Watch out for unsecured computer monitors. Stay away from windows. Know where emergency and first aid supplies are kept. Stay inside until the shaking stops.

### **In the Elevator:**

Stop at the nearest floor and exit. If you cannot exit the elevator, drop, cover and hold on against the interior wall.

### **Outside:**

Drop to the ground and cover your head. Stay away from brick buildings, windows, light poles, trees and overhead wires.

### **In your Car:**

Slow down and stop by the side of the road as soon as possible. (Do not stop on or under overpasses). Try to keep the road clear for emergency vehicles. Always keep your gas tank at least half full. Be patient. Emergencies can lengthen commutes by hours.

### **In the Mall:**

Stay away from glass windows. Try to find something to drop under (bench, table), or crouch down and protect your head. Do not use elevators or moving escalators. Stay inside until the shaking stops.

### **In a Theater or Stadium:**

Stay where you are and try to avoid being trampled by panicking people. Crouch down and protect your head. Wait for officials to indicate a safe way to exit.

*These lists are only suggestions. When the time comes, use your best judgment and adapt, improvise, and overcome!*



## **Prepare Yourself**

- ✓ Know when and how to turn off natural gas, water and electricity
- ✓ Assemble emergency supply kits for home, office and car
- ✓ Practice drop, cover and hold on
- ✓ Talk with your family about two ways to evacuate each room of your house
- ✓ Have two meeting locations outside your home
- ✓ Have one meeting location outside the neighborhood
- ✓ Keep your gas tank at least ½ full at all times
- ✓ Take CPR & First Aid classes
- ✓ Take the Los Altos Hills FREE Personal Emergency Preparedness Workshop

## **Prepare Your Home/Office**

- ✓ Survey your surroundings and note exit locations and emergency equipment available. Address any of the following conditions, as needed:
- ✓ Put latches on cabinets containing glassware or hazardous materials
- ✓ Take unwanted hazardous materials to the County disposal site [www.hhw.org](http://www.hhw.org)
- ✓ Keep flammable liquids on low shelves away from open flames
- ✓ Strap your hot water heater to the wall (1/3 from top and 1/3 from bottom)
- ✓ Anchor decorative items with Quake wax or museum putty
- ✓ Secure heavy furniture and pictures with nylon/velcro straps to the studs in walls
- ✓ Move heavy items to low shelves

## **What can you expect to experience or see after an earthquake?**

Chaos, loud noises, panic-stricken people, broken glass, fire, smoke, water and gas leaks, overturned file cabinets and computer monitors, fallen and broken bookshelves, cabinet doors open with contents on floor, fire sprinklers activated, car accidents, traffic jams, inoperable traffic lights, fallen furniture, broken pictures and mirrors, electrical lines down, power out, no telephones, cracks and buckling in concrete, damaged bridges, highway signs down, fallen street lights, collapsed floors in malls, injured or trapped people screaming for help, fallen bricks, fallen chimneys, fallen building facades, fallen trees, scared and frightened domestic and wild animals, dangling wires that may be charged, disoriented people roaming around in shock.

