

EARTHQUAKE SAFETY INFORMATION

WHAT TO DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

Federal, state, and local emergency management experts and other official preparedness organizations all agree that ***Drop, Cover, and Hold On*** is the appropriate action to reduce injury and death during earthquakes. It is the safest action to take during ground shaking. There are 3 steps:

- **DROP** where you are, onto your hands and knees
- **COVER** your head and neck with one arm and hand, and crawl under a sturdy desk or table if possible
- **HOLD ON** to your shelter until the shaking stops



If there isn't a table or desk near you, drop to the ground and then (if possible) move to an inside corner of the building. Be in a crawling position to protect your vital organs and be ready to move if necessary, and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms. Do not try to run to another room just to get under a table - you are more likely to be injured if you try to run during strong shaking. The main point is: *Even if you cannot Drop, Cover, and Hold On, you should immediately take action to protect your head and neck.*

Earthquakes occur without any warning and may be so violent that you cannot walk or you therefore could likely be knocked to the ground where you happen to be. You will never know if the initial jolt will turn out to be the start of a large earthquake. These are general guidelines for most situations. Depending on where you are (in bed, driving, in a theater, etc.), you might take the following actions:

INDOORS: If you are *able*, "**DROP** to the ground immediately; **COVER** your head and neck with your arms and crawl under a sturdy desk or table if possible; **HOLD ON** to it until the shaking stops. If you use a wheelchair or have mobility impairments and cannot **Drop, Cover, and Hold On**, protect your head and neck your arms, and bend over to protect yourself if you are able. If you cannot **Drop, Cover, and Hold On**, you should immediately take action to protect your head and neck with a pillow or your arms, and bend over to protect yourself if you are able.

IN BED: Stay there and try your best to hold on, protecting your head with a pillow, until the shaking stops.

HIGH-RISE OR A PUBLIC BUILDING: If you are *able*, **Drop, Cover, and Hold On** or protect your head and neck as best possible. Do not use elevators. If you use a wheelchair or have other mobility impairments and cannot **Drop, Cover, and Hold On**, protect your head and neck your arms, and bend over to protect yourself if you are able. When the shaking subsides, you should follow the building evacuation plan or move to the designated zones for evacuation and wait for assistance by first responders if you have mobility impairments.

OUTDOORS: Move to a clear area away from wires, buildings, and anything else that could fall and hurt you, *but only if you can safely do so*. Otherwise stay where you are. If you are *able*, **Drop, Cover, and Hold On** or protect your head and neck as best possible. If you use a wheelchair or have other mobility impairments and cannot **Drop, Cover, and Hold On**, protect your head and neck your arms, and bend over to protect yourself if you are able. Stay where you are until the shaking stops. Only move indoors when it is clear that it is safe to do so.

STADIUM OR THEATER: If you are *able*, **Drop, Cover, and Hold On** or protect your head and neck. Protect your head and neck with your arms as best possible. If you use a wheelchair or have other mobility impairments and cannot **Drop, Cover, and Hold On**, protect your head and neck your arms, and bend over to protect yourself if you are able. Don't try to leave until the shaking is over. When facility staff indicates you to do so, follow their directions to evacuate the premises.

DRIVING: Pull over to the side of the road, stop, and set the parking brake. Avoid bridges and overhead hazards. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over. Remember that some areas of the road may be impassable and you should proceed with caution as you make your way home.

WHAT NOT TO DO: It is particularly important that you **DO NOT** try to get to a "safer place" or run outside while the ground is shaking. Movement will be very difficult and most earthquake related injuries and deaths in the U.S. occur from falling or flying objects hitting you (TVs, lamps, glass, bookcases, etc.) than from collapsed buildings.