

SAFETY TIPS FROM BRETT BOSTON – EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

Remember, when it comes to preparing for an earthquake, it's not if one will happen, but rather when.

If you are indoors ...

Stay inside if you are inside. Drop, cover, and hold on. Hold on to what? Hold on to anything that is part of the building if possible. If not, get under a sturdy table or desk. If you are not near a desk or table drop to the floor against the INTERIOR walls and protect your head and neck with your arms. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, mirrors, tall furniture, large appliances, and kitchen cabinets with heavy objects or glass. Do not go outside! The area near the exterior walls of a building is the most dangerous place to be. Windows, facades and architectural details are often the first parts of the building to collapse if it is going to.

If you are in bed and an earthquake strikes, stay in bed! Hold on and protect your head with a pillow. You are less likely to be injured staying where you are. Resist the urge to bolt out of bed. Remember broken glass on the floor has caused injury to those who have rolled to the floor or tried to get to the doorway.

If you are in a high-rise, drop cover, and hold on. Avoid windows and other hazards. Do not use elevators. Do not be surprised if sprinkler systems or fire alarms activate.

After the shaking stops, check for injuries needing attention and begin to put your disaster plan (I know you all have one now) into operation. Expect aftershocks to occur. They will usually decrease in magnitude with each shock, but they will occur. Remember this is you decide that you have to return to your home for items.

If you are outdoors ...

Stay outside if you are outside. Move to a clear area if you can safely do so. Avoid power lines, trees, signs, and buildings.

If you are driving, pull over to the side of the road; do not stop in the middle. Set your parking brake and try to avoid overpasses, bridges or power lines. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over.

If you are in a public area ...

If you are in a stadium or theater, stay at your seat and protect your head and neck with your arms. Don't try to leave until the shaking is over, and then walk out slowly. Be aware of anything that may fall as you exit. Statistics show that one major contributing factor to mass casualties in theaters or restaurants is that 90 percent of the occupants will try to exit the same way they came in. The next time

you are in a large occupancy, look around for the emergency exits. They will not be hidden. Try this the next time you go to a movie. Leave the theater by the back exit (not the one that is alarmed) rather than going through the lobby with everyone else. You will find it is a much shorter trip and you will usually come out closer to your car.

Contacting family members ...

Do you have an out-of-town contact that members of your family can call in the event of a catastrophic earthquake in your area? You should. If you do you may wonder how you may be able to call them when all the phones are out. Phone service will not be “out,” rather it is just that hundreds of handsets have been knocked off the receivers in hundreds of homes and are calling for dial tones. The system is jammed! You may remember that news media usually report that the phone system is starting to “come back” as the hours pass. People are returning home and replacing hundreds of phones back on the receiver. The system is not jammed anymore. So if you want to make a call, what’s the best way? Not cellular phones since most of us have one and the same thing will happen when we all try to make a call at once. Pay phones are your best bet. The cradle that holds the headset is designed to not allow the receiver to get knocked off. You have a much better chance of getting a call out on a pay phone than any other type. That way when you and your family call your contacts that are out of the area you can find out how everyone is and where they are. Don’t wait for someone else to help – take care of yourself. You’ll be much better off.

Be prepared ...

There are four steps to take before an earthquake:

- 1. Identify potential hazards in your home and begin to fix them.**
- 2. Create your disaster plan.**
- 3. Create your disaster supply kit.**
- 4. Identify potential building weaknesses and begin to fix them.**

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