



# EARTHQUAKES

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Many people do not know about Arizona's earthquake dangers. The entire state has been susceptible to some ground-shaking from time to time, although the southwestern and northwestern part of the state are typically more vulnerable. Earthquakes which occur in neighboring areas, such as California and northern Mexico, can also put us at risk depending on their magnitude.

Although there are no guarantees of safety during an earthquake, you can reduce earthquake caused injuries and property damage by following these basic tips:

### CHECK FOR HAZARDS IN THE HOME

- ❖ Fasten shelves securely to walls;
- ❖ Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves;
- ❖ Store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass, and china in low, closed cabinets with latches;
- ❖ Hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors away from beds, couches, and anywhere people sit;
- ❖ Brace overhead light fixtures;
- ❖ Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections, these are potential fire risks;
- ❖ Secure a water heater by strapping it to the wall studs and bolting it to the floor;
- ❖ Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations. Get expert advice if there are signs of structural defects; and
- ❖ Store weed killers, pesticides, and flammable products securely on bottom shelves in closed cabinets with latches .

### IDENTIFY SAFE PLACES INDOORS AND OUTDOORS

- ❖ Under sturdy furniture such as a heavy desk or table;
- ❖ Against an inside wall;
- ❖ Away from glass windows, mirrors, pictures, heavy bookcases, china buffets, or other furniture which could fall over; and
- ❖ In the open, away from buildings, trees, telephone and electrical lines, overpasses, or elevated expressways.

### EDUCATE YOURSELF AND FAMILY MEMBERS

- ❖ Contact your local emergency management office or American Red Cross chapter for more information on earthquakes;
- ❖ Teach children how and when to call 9-1-1, police, or fire department and which radio station to tune to for emergency information;
- ❖ Teach all family members how and when to turn off gas, electricity, and water;
- ❖ Have disaster supplies on hand; and
- ❖ Develop an Emergency Communication Plan and Emergency Supply Kit.



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## HELP YOUR COMMUNITY GET READY

- ❖ Publish a special section in your local newspaper with emergency information on earthquakes. Localize the information by printing the phone numbers of local emergency services offices, the American Red Cross, and hospitals;
- ❖ Conduct a week-long series on locating hazards in the home;
- ❖ Work with local emergency services and American Red Cross officials to prepare special information for people with special needs on what to do during an earthquake;
- ❖ Provide tips on conducting earthquake drills in the home;
- ❖ Ask representatives of the gas, electric, and water companies about providing information regarding when and how to turn off utilities; and
- ❖ Work together in your community and apply your knowledge to building codes, retrofitting programs, hazard hunts, and neighborhood and family emergency plans.