

## **Preparing Your Home for an Earthquake**

### **Be prepared**

Plan and prepare yourself and your family for an earthquake or another major disaster

[Read the Household Emergency Plan](#)

### **Make an evacuation plan**

- Designate a family meeting place - one just outside the home and a secondary place outside of the neighbourhood
- Establish an out of province contact
- [Prepare your home](#)
- Prepare emergency supplies
- Go through your home, imagining what could happen to each part of it if it were shaken violently.
- Seek advice from professionals (insurance, engineers, architects) if you are unsure what to do.

If you live in a condo or apartment building, you may experience more sway and less vibration than in a single-storey building. Work with your building or strata corporation manager to help quake-proof your home.

### **Prepare your home**

- Know your utility shut-off valves (gas, electric, water)
- Plan all possible exits
- Check for home hazards: Is the house bolted to its foundations? Are the walls braced? Chimneys weak? Are roof tiles loose? Make necessary repairs now
- Tie down your water heater and other appliances that could break gas or water lines if they topple.
- Secure top-heavy furniture (eg: shelving units) to prevent tipping. Keep heavy items on lower shelves. ]
- Fix mirrors and other hanging objects so they won't fall off hooks.
- Locate beds away from chimneys, windows, heavy pictures, etc.
- Closed curtains will help keep broken window glass off nearby occupied beds.
- Put anti-skid pads (eg: Velcro) under TVs, VCRs, computers and small appliances.
- Store valuable documents and special small keepsakes in a fire-resistant place.

- Keep sturdy shoes and outdoor clothing handy.
- Use child-proof or safety latches on cupboards to stop contents from spilling out.
- Keep flammable items and household chemicals away from heat and where they can't spill. Keep them in safe cupboard if they can't be stored in an outside shed.
- Put plywood up in the attic on joists around each chimney to help prevent bricks and mortar from coming through a ceiling.

## **Earthquake Preparedness Videos**

This series of videos will help you prepare your home for an earthquake:

- [How to Turn Off Water](#)
- [How to Turn Off Electricity](#)
- [How to Turn Off Propane](#)
- [How to Turn Off Natural Gas](#)
- [Carbon Monoxide Poisoning](#)
- [Power Line Safety](#)
- [Using Water from your Water Heater During Disasters](#)
- [Using a Fire Extinguisher](#)
- [What to get on your Trip to the Hardware Store](#)
- [Finding a Wall Stud](#)
- [How to Install Bookcase Hardware](#)
- [How to Secure a Bookcase with Velcro Straps](#)
- [How to Secure Wall Hangings](#)
- [How to Secure Cabinets](#)
- [How to Secure Dishes](#)
- [How to Secure Your Water Heater](#)
- [Generator Safety](#)
- [Safe Storage of Household Chemicals](#)

***Note: all videos courtesy of the Washington State Emergency Management Division.***