

# **PUBLIC AWARENESS FOR AN EARTHQUAKE**

## **WHAT ARE EARTHQUAKES AND WHAT CAUSES THEM?**

An earthquake is a sudden, rapid shaking of the earth's caused by the breaking and shifting of rock beneath the earth's surface.

## **PLAN FOR AN EARTHQUAKE**

- Develop a family disaster plan.
- Pick safe places in each room of your house.
- Practice drop cover and hold-on in each safe place.
- Practice drop, cover and hold-on at least twice a year.
- Talk with your insurance agent.
- Inform guests, babysitters and caregivers of your plan.
- Get training.
- Discuss earthquakes with your family.

## **WHAT TO TELL CHILDREN**

- Find safe places in every room of your home and classroom (**TELL THEM TO ASK A TEACHER**).
- Look for safe places inside and outside of other buildings where you spend time.
- If you are indoors during an earthquake, drop, cover, and hold-on.
- Wait in your safe place until shaking stops, then check to see if you are hurt.
- Be on the lookout for fires.
- If you must leave the building after the shaking stops always use the stairs never an elevator.
- If you are outside in an earthquake, stay outside. Move away from buildings, trees, streetlights and power lines. Crouch down and cover your head.

## **HOW TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY**

### **SECURING**

- Bolt bookcases, china cabinets and other tall furniture to wall studs. Brace or anchor high or top heavy objects.
- Bolt down any gas appliance.
- Strap the water heater to wall studs.
- Secure items that might fall (T.V., books, computers).
- Move large or heavy objects and fragile items (knick knacks) to lower shelves.
- Hang heavy items such as pictures and mirrors, away from beds, couches and anywhere people sit.
- Brace overhead light fixtures.

### **MAINTENANCE**

- Store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass and china in low, closed cabinets with latches.
- Store weed-killers, pesticides and flammable products securely in closed cabinets with latches, on bottom shelves.
- Install strong latch or bolts on cabinets.

- Install flexible pipe fittings to avoid gas or water leaks.
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations. Get expert advice if there are signs of structural defects.
- Consider having your building evaluated by a professional structural design engineer.

## **WHAT TO DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE**

### **INDOORS**

- Drop, cover and hold-on.
- If you are in bed hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow.
- Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you're sure its safe to exit.
- Stay away from windows.
- In a high rise building expect the fire alarms and sprinklers to go off during a quake.

### **OUTDOORS**

- If you are outside in an earthquake, find a clear spot away from buildings, trees, streetlights and power lines. Drop to ground and stay there until shaking stops.
- If you are in a vehicle, pull over to a clear location, stop and stay there with your seatbelt fastened until the shaking has stopped.
- If you are in coastal area move to higher ground.
- If you are in a mountainous/hilly (e.g. John Hughes/Folly Gut/Old Road/Crabb Hill) area or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for falling rocks and other debris that could be loosened by the earthquake.

## **WHAT TO DO AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE**

### **SELF**

- Check yourself for injuries.
- Protect yourself from further injury by putting on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes and work gloves.
- After you have taken care of yourself, help injured or trapped persons.
- Expect aftershocks.
- Listen to a portable, battery-operated radio or television for updated emergency information and instructions.

### **HOME**

- Inspect your home for damage.
- Use battery powered lanterns or flashlights to inspect your home.
- Open closet and cabinet doors cautiously.
- If you smell gas or think its leaking shut off main.
- Look for and extinguish small fires (ELIMINATE FIRE HAZARDS).
- Clean up spilled medicine, bleaches, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately.
- Get everyone out if your home is unsafe or after a very large quake.
- Take pictures of the damage, both to the house and its contents, for insurance claims.

**SEARCH**

- Stay out of damaged buildings.
- When entering buildings, use extreme caution.
- Watch out for fallen power-lines or broken gas lines and stay out of damaged areas.
- Help neighbors who may require special assistance.
- Avoid smoking inside of buildings.