

Emergency Preparedness Checklist for Earthquakes

Earthquakes occur most frequently west of the Rocky Mountains, although historically the most violent have occurred in the central United States. Earthquakes occur suddenly and without warning and can seriously damage buildings and their contents; disrupt gas, electric, and telephone services; and trigger landslides, avalanches, flash floods, fires, and huge ocean waves, called tsunamis. Aftershocks can occur for weeks following an earthquake.

Your business should have a written plan for preparing for earthquakes. Consider the following guidelines when preparing your plans:

	Yes	No	N/A
Have you had your facility inspected by a structural engineer to assess its vulnerability to earthquakes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you asked local government agencies for seismic information for your area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Based on the engineering inspection, have you developed and prioritized strengthening measures including:			
Adding steel bracing to frames?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adding shear walls to frames?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Strengthening columns and building foundations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Replacing unreinforced brick filler walls?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you followed codes when constructing a facility or making major renovations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you inspected non-structural systems, such as air conditioning, communications, and pollution control systems, to assess the potential for damage and prioritize measures to prevent damage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you inspected your facility for any item that could fall, spill, break, or move during an earthquake including:			
Moving large and heavy objects to lower shelves or the floor, and hanging heavy items away from where people work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Securing shelves, filing cabinets, tall furniture, desktop equipment, computers, printers, copiers, and light fixtures?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Securing fixed equipment and heavy machinery to the floor (larger equipment can be placed on casters and attached to tethers that attach to the wall)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adding bracing to suspended ceilings, if necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Installing safety glass, where appropriate?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Securing large utility and process piping?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Are copies of facility design drawings maintained so that they can be used in assessing the facility's safety after an earthquake?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you reviewed processes for handling and storing hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are incompatible chemicals stored separately?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you asked your insurance carrier about earthquake insurance and mitigation techniques?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have procedures been established to determine whether an evacuation is necessary after an earthquake?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have you designated areas in the facility, away from exterior walls and windows, where personnel should gather after an earthquake if an evacuation is not necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are earthquake drills conducted?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Have personnel been provided with earthquake safety information including:			
If indoors during an earthquake, stay there, take cover under a sturdy piece of furniture or counter, or brace yourself against an inside wall, and protect your head and neck.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If outdoors during an earthquake, move into the open, away from buildings, street lights, and utility wires.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
After an earthquake, stay away from windows, skylights, and items that could fall and do not use the elevators.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use stairways to leave the building if it is determined that a building evacuation is necessary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If your facility is located near the ocean, have you planned for the possibility of a tsunami in your emergency plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If your facility is located at the base of a mountain or high hill, have you planned for the possibility of landslides, mudslides, or avalanches in your emergency plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If your facility is located in a low plain or valley, have you planned for the possibility of floods in your emergency plans?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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