

## Earthquake Safety

Living in California, you may have experienced an earthquake (or two). While earthquakes of any magnitude can cause different levels of disruption and destruction, it is important to keep in mind how to prepare for an earthquake, what to do during, and equally as important steps to take after the earthquake is over.

The first step is to prepare in advance. Make sure any large equipment or furniture is secured and stable, and make sure that all exits and walkways are cleared for quick evacuation if needed. Be sure to store chemicals properly, in groups that don't potentially have dangerous reactions. Know where the fire extinguisher is located, as well as the location of a flashlight, a radio and extra batteries. You can prepare personal supplies that can be left in your car, which may include non-perishable food, water, and any necessary toiletry supplies. Have your employer keep emergency contact phone numbers for everyone, and have a plan of how to evacuate, where to meet and how to make sure everyone is accounted for.

If you are inside during an earthquake, duck or drop down on the floor, or stand against an interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms; stay away from any windows or glass that could shatter. Do not try to run outdoors, as you may be injured by falling objects. If you find yourself outside, stay away from anything that may topple - trees, buildings, power lines or freeway overpasses. Be aware that there may be one or more aftershocks, and you still need to stay as protected as possible. Although they may not be as strong, they can still cause additional damage.

After the shaking is over, listen to your radio for the latest emergency information, and to find out the status of roads you may be using. Telephone lines will likely be extremely busy, so only use yours for making emergency calls. Take a look at your surroundings. Stay away from any area that appears to be damaged, and be careful of any cabinets or shelves where objects are likely to have shifted. If you see any chemical spills, clean them up; however if you smell gas or chemical fumes leave the area immediately.

As always, preparation is crucial. Not only at your worksite, but also at home create an emergency plan that your entire family can follow. Remember, while we can't plan for earthquakes we can be sure to be prepared.