

When the ground stops shaking

Check for injuries

- Render aid as possible. Do not move seriously injured people unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Cover injured people with blankets to keep them warm.
- Do not use the telephone unless there is a severe injury. (It helps keep lines free for those with true emergencies.)
- Wear shoes in areas near fallen debris or broken glass.

Check for hazards

- If possible, put out small fires. If not, leave your home immediately, notify the fire department if possible and alert your neighbors.
- Use a battery-powered flashlight to inspect your home. Turn the flashlight on outside before entering, because the battery may produce a spark that could ignite leaking gas, if present.
- Check gas, electrical and water lines, and check appliances for damage. If – but only if – you smell gas or see a broken line, shut off the main valve from the outside. Do not switch on the electricity again until the power company has first checked your home. Remember, if gas is turned off, a professional must restore service. Do not search for gas leaks with a lighted match.
- Switch off electrical power if there is damage to your house electrical wiring. If the situation is unsafe, leave your home and seek help.
- Do not touch downed lines or broken appliances.

- Check the building for cracks and damage, particularly around chimneys and masonry walls. Leave immediately if it looks like the building might collapse. Use fireplaces only if the chimney has no damage and no cracks.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches and gasoline and other flammable liquids.
- Check to see that water and sewage lines are intact before using the toilet. Plug bathtub and sink drains to prevent sewage backup.
- Check water and food supplies. If the water is cut off, use emergency water supplies in water heaters and melted ice cubes. Throw out all food that may be spoiled or contaminated.
- Check closets and cupboards. Open doors cautiously. Beware of objects tumbling off shelves.
- Use charcoal or gas grills for emergency cooking only out of doors.
- Do not use your car unless there is an emergency. Do not go sightseeing through areas of damage. You will only hamper the relief effort.
- Be prepared for aftershocks.

If you have to evacuate:

- Post a message in clear view that states where you can be found.
- Take your disaster supplies kit.
- List reunion points in case of separation, such as the homes of friends, schools or community centers.