



Earthquake Safety In The Workplace

According to the U.S. Geological Survey, a damaging earthquake strikes somewhere in California on an average of every two years.

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The following is a list of several damaging earthquakes of 6.0 magnitude or greater that have resulted in significant damage within the County of Riverside since 1992.

- April 22, 1992 Joshua Tree Earthquake, magnitude 6.1
- June 28, 1992 Landers Earthquake, magnitude 7.3
- June 28, 1992 Big Bear Earthquake, magnitude 6.3
- October 16, 1999 Hector Mine Earthquake, magnitude 7.1

Since 1987, Southern California has been hit by at least nine damaging earthquakes. These events and earthquakes recently reported in the news remind us of the seismic threat we are exposed to while living and working in Southern California.



This article outlines a simple “three line of defense” strategy to help you prepare for when the next earthquake strikes:

1st Line of Defense—Prepare

Step One:

Secure It Now

Reducing and or eliminating hazards throughout your workplace can greatly reduce the risk of injury or death. Conduct a “hazard hunt” of your work area to help identify such things as unsecured book cases, televisions, computers, and heavy decorative objects. Having these items secured now will help protect you and your co-workers tomorrow. Additionally, securing these items can assist in maintaining clear paths of egress during a disaster.

Step Two:

Make a Plan

Planning for an earthquake or an emergency is one of the most important things that can be done to effectively respond to a disaster. Make sure that you are knowledgeable of your work location’s Emergency Action Plan. Part of your Emergency Action Plan includes evacuation procedures and will identify an evacuation site where employees can be accounted for to ensure they are safe. Check with your manager or designated safety representative (DSR) if you have any questions about your work location’s Emergency Action Plan. A little bit of planning now will help ensure that you will be ready for an emergency.



Step Three:

Have Disaster Supplies Ready

Everyone should have disaster supplies stored in an accessible location at work. Having emergency supplies readily available can reduce the impact of an earthquake. Disaster supplies for an office environment typically include: food, water, flashlights, portable radio, batteries, and a first aid kit. If possible, employees should keep a light jacket and a pair of comfortable shoes at their work station.

Step Four:

Is Your Place Safe

During an earthquake a building may become unsafe to occupy and evacuation may be necessary. You can further prepare for an emergency by becoming familiar with the floor plan of your work environment. Look for and identify any potential fire sources. Know at least two routes to an emergency exit in case one becomes blocked or obstructed. Be prepared to move toward the center of the floor space away from windows that could break.

2nd Line of Defense - Protect

Step Five:

Drop, Cover, and Hold On

Learn what to do during an earthquake. Taking the proper

actions, such as, "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" can save lives and

Basic Disaster Supplies Kit

A basic emergency supply kit could include the following recommended items:

- Water, one gallon of water per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Whistle to signal for help
- Dust mask to help filter contaminated air and plastic sheeting and duct tape to shelter-in-place
- Moist towelettes, garbage bags and plastic ties for personal sanitation
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Manual can opener for food
- Local maps
- Cell phone with chargers, inverter or solar charger



Additional Items to Consider Adding to an Emergency Supply Kit:

- Prescription medications and glasses
- Infant formula and diapers
- Pet food and extra water for your pet
- Important family documents such as copies of insurance policies, identification and bank account records in a waterproof, portable container
- Cash or traveler's checks and change
- Emergency reference material such as a first aid book or information from www.ready.gov
- Sleeping bag or warm blanket for each person. Consider additional bedding if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Complete change of clothing including a long sleeved shirt, long pants and sturdy shoes. Consider additional clothing if you live in a cold-weather climate.
- Household chlorine bleach and medicine dropper - When diluted nine parts water to one part bleach, bleach can be used as a disinfectant. Or in an emergency, you can use it to treat water by using 1/8 drops of regular household liquid bleach per gallon of water. Do not use scented, color safe or bleaches with added cleaners.
- Fire Extinguisher
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Feminine supplies and personal hygiene items
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Paper and pencil
- Books, games, puzzles or other activities for children



Prepare. Plan. Stay Informed. 8



Emergency Supply List



FEMA

www.ready.gov