

DO YOU KNOW THE FACTS ABOUT... EARTHQUAKE RISK?

The central U.S. is vulnerable to damaging earthquakes and has the highest level of seismicity in the country east of the Rocky Mountains - unknowingly to the public, approximately 250 earthquakes occur each year in the region.



EARTHQUAKE SAFETY & SURVIVAL TIPS

Important Disaster Preparedness Websites

www.cusec.org
www.fema.gov
www.ready.gov
www.dropcoverholdon.org

DISCLAIMER

The safety information contained in this brochure was compiled from many sources. The Central United States Earthquake Consortium and its Members are not responsible and assume no liability for any actions undertaken by any person using information contained herein or for any injury, death or property loss which occurs in connection with an earthquake.

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For more information
on earthquake safety and mitigation,
please visit the CUSEC website at www.cusec.org
or call (800) 824-5817.

Central U.S. Earthquake Consortium
2630 E. Holmes Road, Memphis, TN 38118
Online: www.cusec.org | Toll Free: (800) 824-5817



FEMA

YES YOU CAN

SURVIVE AN EARTHQUAKE

Safety & Survival Tips

*An Educational Resource Provided by the
Central United States Earthquake Consortium*

EARTHQUAKES IN THE CENTRAL U.S.

The central United States has several known seismic zones that produce earthquakes on a regular basis. The New Madrid, Wabash Valley, and East Tennessee Seismic Zones have the highest level of seismic activity in the country east of the Rocky Mountains. In addition to these well known seismic zones, other areas are also capable of producing damaging earthquakes. With no warning, a damaging earthquake could strike any of these areas. Depending on magnitude and location, an earthquake could impact multiple states, causing major physical, social, and economic disruption in a region that is home to more than forty million people.

In the winter of 1811-1812, a series of at least three M7.0 or greater earthquakes (and thousands of smaller aftershocks) struck the central U.S. near New Madrid, Missouri. In those times, the region was sparsely populated and had little infrastructure. Today, similar earthquakes would cause widespread damage and disruption to the entire nation. On April 18, 2008, a M5.2 earthquake struck near Mt. Carmel, Illinois. This relatively minor earthquake was felt in 18 states and responsible for an estimated \$3 million in non-structural damages. This event showed that a larger earthquake would have widespread impacts on the region.

Earthquakes continue to occur in this region, with minor events happening almost daily. Most are too small to be felt. While we cannot prevent or predict earthquakes, we can prepare for them. This brochure will help you learn what to do before, during, and after an earthquake.

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with minor events happening daily.*

BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE

- ✓ **PLAN** and hold earthquake drills for your family and business. Choose a location where family members will meet if they are separated during the quake. Select a relative or friend outside the area for separated family members to report their condition and location. Know the safe places in each room of your home or business. Understand that earthquake damage may interrupt power, telecommunications, and transportation systems.
- ✓ **MAKE** your home and business safer by securing heavy or hazardous items. Strap water heaters, appliances, cabinets, and freestanding furniture to wall studs. Anchor overhead lighting where possible. Secure cabinet doors with latches to keep them closed during an earthquake. Keep large or heavy objects on lower shelves. You should also take care to secure wall pictures, mirrors, ornaments, and other hanging objects.
- ✓ **ASSEMBLE** a disaster supply kit that allows you to be self-sufficient for at least seven to ten days. In your kit, include first aid supplies, drinking water, non-perishable food, a can opener, flashlights, batteries, and a battery or hand-powered radio. You will also need a change of clothing, money, copies of important paperwork, any prescription medications, blankets, sanitation supplies, and pet food if you have a pet.
- ✓ **CHECK** for defective electrical wiring and make sure gas connections and water connections are secure. Check with your local utility department to learn how to properly shut off your electricity, gas, and water in case of emergency.

DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

- ✓ **KEEP CALM** Expect the earthquake to last from a few seconds to several minutes or more. The ground will feel like the deck of a ship, but it will NOT open up and swallow you. Remember, most injuries are caused by falling objects and debris
- ✓ **IF INDOORS,** stay there. DROP to the floor, take COVER under a sturdy desk or table, and HOLD ON to it firmly. Be prepared to move with it until the shaking stops. If you are not near a desk or table, drop to the floor against the interior wall and protect your head and neck with your arms. Avoid exterior walls, windows, hanging objects, mirrors, tall furniture, large appliances, and kitchen cabinets with heavy objects or glass. Do not go outside until it is safe to do so!

...During an Earthquake cont.

- ✓ **IF IN BED,** hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow.
- ✓ **IF IN A HIGH-RISE, DROP, COVER, and HOLD ON.** Avoid large windows or other hazards and don't use elevators. Don't be surprised if the fire alarm or sprinkler system activates.
- ✓ **IF OUTDOORS,** move into an open area away from wires, buildings, and anything else that could fall and hurt you.
- ✓ **IF DRIVING,** safely pull over, stop, and set the parking brake as quickly as possible. Avoid bridges and overpasses, power lines, signs and other hazards. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over.

AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

- ✓ **BE PREPARED** for aftershocks and remember to **DROP, COVER, and HOLD ON** if the shaking starts again. If you are in a building, look around to see if it is obviously damaged. If it is, evacuate to a safer location until it can be inspected further by a professional. If you have to evacuate your home or building, ensure that you follow your personal/family disaster plan so that you will be able to communicate with your family following the earthquake.
- ✓ **CHECK** for injuries. Do not move injured persons unless they are in immediate danger.
- ✓ **TURN ON** your emergency radio or television for emergency information and instructions. DO NOT use the telephone unless there is a serious injury or fire.
- ✓ **CHECK UTILITIES** for gas and water leaks and broken electrical connections. If there is damage to the gas lines, or if you smell gas, open the windows, turn off gas at the main valve, and report the leak to authorities. Turn off the main water valve if there are leaks. Do not drink the tap water, as it may not be pure. Sewage lines may be damaged, so do not flush the toilet right away. You may want to plug up sinks and bathtubs to prevent any sewage backflow. If the electrical wiring is shorting, shut off the main circuit breaker.
- ✓ **CLEAN UP** any spilled medications, cleaning products, or flammable liquids. Check food and water supplies. Open cabinets carefully, since objects may fall out. You can use emergency water from melted ice cubes, toilet tanks (not bowls), and your hot water heaters.