



EARTHQUAKES

The time to prepare for an earthquake is NOW... not next week or after the shock. Protect your family by taking the actions on the **BEFORE Checklist** as soon as you can. It's a good idea to make copies of the **DURING Checklist** and post them by your house and garage exits and in all your family cars.

Before the Earthquake

- Identify safe spots in each room of your home. Note sturdy tables, desks, and interior walls. Know your danger spots: windows, mirrors, hanging objects, fireplaces, and tall, unsecured furniture.
- Conduct practice drills with your family and know the safest locations in your home.
- Decide how and where your family will reunite, if separated during an earthquake.
- Choose an out-of-state friend or relative to contact so family and friends know your status.
- Learn First Aid and CPR and put together a First Aid Kit.
- Learn how to shut off gas, water and electricity; it may be necessary during an earthquake.
- Check chimneys, roofs, walls, and foundations for stability – make sure your house is bolted to its foundation.
- Secure your water heater and major appliances as well as tall, heavy furniture, hanging plants, mirrors, and picture frames. Visit www.daretopprepare.org online for ways to secure your home.
- Keep breakables, heavy objects, and flammable or hazardous liquids such as paints, pest sprays, and cleaning products in secured cabinets or on lower shelves.
- Participate in organizing your neighborhood to be self-sufficient after an earthquake.

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During the Earthquake

- If indoors, stay there. Get under a desk or table or stand in a corner. Stay away from windows, bookcases, file cabinets, heavy mirrors, hanging plants and other heavy objects that could fall. Watch out for falling plaster and ceiling tiles. Stay under cover until the shaking stops. Hold on to your cover – if it moves, move with it.
- If outdoors, get into an open area away from trees, buildings, walls, and power lines.
- If driving, pull over to the side of the road and stop. Avoid areas around power lines. Stay in your car until the shaking is over.
- If in a crowded public place, do not rush for the doors. Crouch and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms.

On March 10, 1933 at 5:54 p.m., a magnitude 6.4 earthquake hit the Newport-Inglewood Fault, causing serious damage in Long Beach and other communities.

The earthquake resulted in 120 deaths and more than \$50 million in property damage.



NORTHRIDGE EARTHQUAKE

At 4:30 am, on January 17, 1994, residents of the greater Los Angeles area were rudely awakened by the strong shaking of the Northridge earthquake. This was the first earthquake to strike directly under an urban area of the United States since the 1933 Long Beach earthquake.

The magnitude 6.7 Northridge quake killed 72 people, knocked seven freeways out of service, and caused \$20 billion in damage. Until the destruction of New Orleans, it was the worst damage ever inflicted on a U.S. city in most Americans' lifetimes.

The earthquake occurred on a previously-unknown blind thrust fault under the mountains north of Porter Ranch, and produced the strongest ground motions ever instrumentally recorded in an urban setting in North America. It raised the elevation of Oat Mountain, north of the city, by about 20 inches, scientists later measured.

Damage was wide-spread, sections of major freeways collapsed, parking structures and office buildings collapsed, and numerous apartment buildings suffered irreparable damage. Damage to wood-frame apartment houses was very widespread in the San Fernando Valley and Santa Monica areas, especially to structures with "soft" first floor or lower-level parking garages. The high accelerations, both vertical and horizontal, lifted structures off of their foundations and/or shifted walls laterally.

The Santa Clarita area was cut off from Los Angeles, as bridges in the Newhall Pass were brought down by an earthquake for the second time in 23 years. In the San Fernando Valley, geysers of water from broken mains swirled around geysers of flame from broken gas mains. Tent cities were built in valley parks, and lasted for a week with overnight temperatures in the 30s, as a cold front moved in to the region.



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After the Earthquake

- Do not attempt to use the telephone unless there is an immediate, life-threatening emergency.
- If it is safe, check for gas and water leaks, and broken electrical wiring or sewage lines. If there is damage, turn the utility off at the source and immediately report gas leaks to your utility company.
- Stay away from downed power lines and warn others to stay away.
- Do not attempt to re-light the gas pilot unless your gas line has been thoroughly inspected. Call the Gas Company for assistance.
- If you are able to safely do so, check your building for cracks and damages, including the roof, chimney, and foundation.
- Turn on your portable radio for instructions and news reports.
- Cooperate fully with public safety officials and follow instructions; they are trained to ensure safety.
- Do not use your vehicle unless there is an emergency.
- Be prepared for aftershocks – Stay calm and help others.
- If you evacuate, leave a message at your home telling family members and others where you can be found.

FORT TEJON EARTHQUAKE

The greatest Southern California earthquake in modern history was the Fort Tejon Earthquake on January 9, 1857 that measured 8.0 on the Richter Scale. Damage was not nearly as serious as it would be today, mostly because Southern California was sparsely populated. The effects of the quake were quite dramatic, even frightening.

If the Fort Tejon shock happened today, the damage would easily run into billions of dollars, and the loss of life would be substantial. The present-day communities of Wrightwood and Palmdale lie upon or near the 1857 rupture area.

