



# Earthquake Safety

While the State of Rhode Island has not experienced a major earthquake, it has experienced minor tremors. Rhode Island has also felt earthquakes from neighboring New England States, New York, and Canada. Since these tremors continue to take place, and larger earthquakes are possible, it is important to be prepared. Download our “Earthquake Safety Guide” to prepare yourself and your family.

## Before an Earthquake:

- Make a Disaster-Supply Kit.
- Make and practice your Family Emergency Communications Plan.
- Fasten shelves and heavy items (i.e. pictures, mirrors, etc.) to walls. Make sure they do not hang over a bed, couch, or anywhere people may sit.
- Put large or heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Store breakable items in lower cabinets, drawers, or other storage units.
- Repair frayed electrical wiring and leaking gas connections. Get a licensed, certified professional to do the repair work.
- Secure your water heater, refrigerator, furnace, or any other gas appliances to the wall studs and bolt them to your floor.
- Repair any deep cracks in the ceiling or foundation. Be sure your home or business is firmly attached to the foundation.
- Store pesticides, chemicals, and flammable items on lower shelves or drawers.
- Identify safe areas in each room of your house. A safe area could be under a sturdy table or against an inside wall.

## During an Earthquake:

- Drop to the ground, take cover in a previously identified safe area in your home, or under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture nearby and hold on until the shaking stops.

## During an Earthquake (cont.):

- Stay away from glass, windows, outdoor walls and doors, or other items that may fall.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops and it is safe to go outside.
- If you are outside when the earthquake starts, stay outside. Stay away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires.
- If you are in a car when the earthquake starts, stop the car (as soon as it is safe to do so) and stay in the car. Avoid stopping near buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires.

## After an Earthquake:

- When the shaking stops, look around to make sure it is safe to move. If it is safe, leave the home or building.
- Expect aftershocks. Aftershocks usually happen within hours of the primary quake, but can still occur days, weeks, or even months later.
- If you see someone who is injured or trapped, call 911 for help.
- Look for and extinguish small fires on or near your property ONLY if you have a properly working fire extinguisher. If you see a large fire, call 911 for help.
- If the power is out, listen to a battery-operated radio for any emergency messages.
- Be careful when opening cabinet doors. Items may have moved during the earthquake and could fall off shelves.
- Have your chimney inspected before using your fireplace.
- Inspect your utilities. Check for leaks and damages. If you hear or smell a gas leak, shut off the gas, open a window, and leave the house. Contact your utility provider as soon as possible.