

EARTHQUAKES

An earthquake is a sudden, rapid shaking of the earth caused by the breaking and shifting of rock beneath the earth's surface. Earthquakes strike suddenly, with little or no warning, and can occur at any time of the year, day, or night. Earthquakes are rare events in Maryland, but not unprecedented.

Before an Earthquake:

- Identify safe places such as under a sturdy piece of furniture or against an interior wall. Practice how to "Drop, Cover, and Hold On!"
- Secure items that could fall and cause injuries (e.g., bookshelves, mirrors, light fixtures).

During an Earthquake:

- Implement the "Drop, Cover, and Hold on" method
- Stay where you are until the shaking stops. Do not run outside. Do not get in a doorway as this does not provide protection from falling or flying objects, and you may not be able to remain standing.
- Drop down onto your hands and knees and cover your head and neck with your arms to protect yourself from falling debris.
- Hold on to any sturdy covering so you can move with it until the shaking stops.
- People who use wheelchairs or other mobility devices should lock their wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops. Protect your head and neck with your arms, a pillow, a book, or whatever is available.
- If you are outdoors when the shaking starts, move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires.
- If you are in a moving vehicle, stop as quickly and safely as possible and stay in the vehicle. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses, and utility wires.

After an Earthquake:

- When the shaking stops, look around. If there is a clear path to safety, leave the building and go to an open space away from damaged areas.
- If you are trapped, do not move around or kick up dust. Tap on a pipe or wall so rescuers can locate you.
- If you have a cell phone with you, call or text for help.
- Once safe, monitor local news reports via battery operated radio, TV, social media, and cell phone text alerts for emergency information and instructions.

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