

**Wherever you are,
protect yourself!**

You may be in situation where you cannot find shelter beneath furniture (or low against a wall, with your arms covering your head and neck). It is important to think about what you will do to protect yourself wherever you are.

DROP

COVER

HOLD ON!



Office of Homeland
Security & Emergency
Management
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Portage Prepares

Helping Portage County Citizens prepare for emergencies and disasters.

2013

Earthquake Safety

One of the most frightening and destructive event of nature is a severe earthquake and its terrible aftereffects. An earthquake is the sudden, rapid shaking of the earth, caused by the breaking and shifting of subterranean rock as it releases strain that has accumulated over a long time.

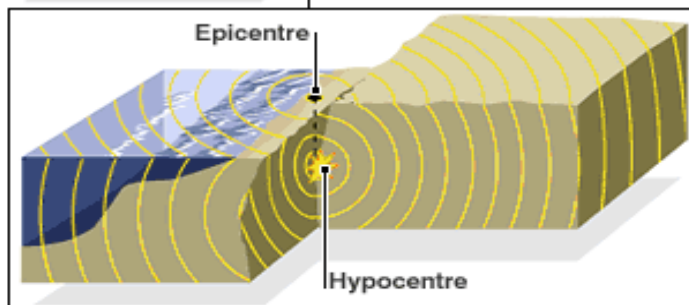
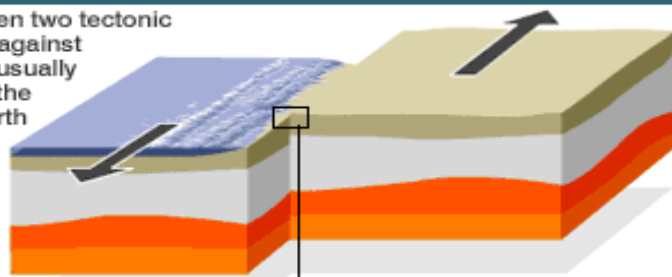
For millions of years the forces of plate tectonics have shaped the earth, as the huge plates that form the earth's surface slowly move over, under and past each other. Sometimes, the movement is gradual. At other times, the plates are locked together, unable to release accumulated energy. When the accumulated energy grows strong enough, the plates break free. If the earthquake occurs in a populated area, it may cause many deaths and injuries and extensive property damage.

While earthquakes are sometimes believed to be a West Coast occurrence, there are actually 45 states and territories throughout the United States that are at moderate to high risk for earthquakes including the New Madrid fault line in Central U.S.

The 2011 East Coast earthquake illustrated the fact that it is impossible to predict when or where an earthquake will occur, so it is important that you and your family are prepared ahead of time.

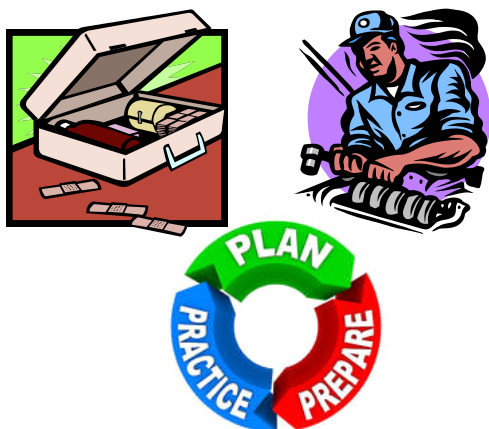
EARTHQUAKES

Earthquakes occur when two tectonic plates move suddenly against each other. The rocks usually break underground at the hypocentre and the earth shakes. Waves spread from the epicentre, the point on the surface above the hypocentre. If a quake occurs under the sea it can cause a tsunami.

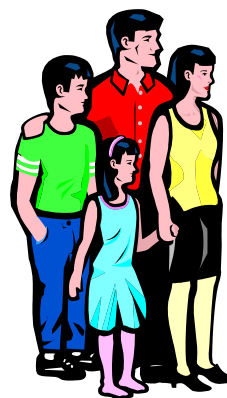


Before an Earthquake:

- Build an emergency kit and make a family communications plan.
- Fasten shelves securely to walls and place large or heavy objects on lower shelves.
- Store breakable items such as bottled foods and glass in low, closed cabinets with latches.
- Fasten heavy items such as pictures and mirrors securely to walls and away from beds, couches and anywhere people sit.
- Brace overhead light fixtures and top heavy objects.
- Repair defective electrical wiring and leaky gas connections. Get appropriate professional help
- Install flexible pipe fittings to avoid gas or water leaks. Flexible fittings are more resistant to breakage.
- Secure your water heater, refrigerator, furnace and gas appliances by strapping them to the wall studs and bolting to the floor.
- If recommended by your gas company, have an automatic gas shut-off valve installed that is triggered by strong vibrations.
- Repair any deep cracks in ceilings or foundations. Get expert advice if there are signs of structural defects.
- Be sure the residence is firmly anchored to its foundation.
- Locate safe spots in each room under a sturdy table or against an inside wall.
- Hold earthquake drills with your family members: Drop, cover and hold on.

**After an Earthquake:**

- When the shaking stops, look around to make sure it is safe to move. Then exit the building.
- Expect aftershocks.
- Help injured or trapped persons. Call for help.
- Look for and extinguish small fires.
- Listen to a battery-operated radio or television for the latest emergency information.
- Be aware of possible tsunamis if you live in coastal areas.
- Use the telephone only for emergency calls.
- Go to a designated public shelter if your home had been damaged and is no longer safe.
- Stay away from damaged areas.
- Be careful when driving after an earthquake and anticipate traffic light outages.
- After it is determined that it's safe to return, your safety should be your primary priority as you begin clean up and recovery.
- Open cabinets cautiously.
- Find out how to keep food safe during and after an emergency by visiting: <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/emergency/index.html>
- Put on long pants, a long-sleeved shirt, sturdy shoes and work gloves to protect against injury from broken objects.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately. Leave the area if you smell gas or fumes from other chemicals.
- Inspect the entire length of chimneys for damage. Unnoticed damage could lead to a fire.
- Inspect utilities.



Portage Prepares is a county education program for preparing Portage County communities to meet the challenges of emergencies and/or disasters in order to be safe and reduce injury. Portage Prepares is a program of the Portage County Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Management and its Advisory Committee under the guidance of the Portage County Board of Commissioners. For additional information on emergency preparedness, go to our website at: www.co.portage.oh.us/portageprep/ or follow us on Facebook at: www.facebook.com/PortagePrepares or follow us on Twitter @PortagePrep.