

## EARTHQUAKE SAFETY RULES

Maricopa County has been subjected to earthquakes and may be again in the future. By far the most important hazard is the shaking of the ground. This in turns shakes buildings, causing objects to fall and structures to collapse partially or totally. Construction and housekeeping should be undertaken to reduce earthquake hazards.

### BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE:

- Have a battery-powered radio, flashlight and first aid kit in your home. Make sure everyone knows where they are stored. Keep batteries on hand.
- Learn first aid.
- Know the location of your electric fuse/circuit breaker box, and the gas and water shut-off valves (keep a wrench nearby). Make sure all responsible members of your family learn how to turn them off.
- Don't keep heavy objects on high shelves.
- Securely fasten heavy appliances to the floor and anchor heavy furniture, such as cupboards and bookcases, to the wall.
- Devise a plan for reuniting family members after an earthquake in the event that the group becomes separated.

### DURING AN EARTHQUAKE:

#### ➤ Indoors

Stand against a wall near the center of the building, in a corner away from windows, in a strong doorway, or against a pillar; or get under a table, desk, or sturdy piece of furniture.

Avoid falling objects, light fixtures, and building materials.

Stay away from windows, mirrors, chimneys, high bookcases, china cabinets, shelves and other furniture that might slide or topple.

Extinguish fires.

Do not run outside.

Do not use candles, matches or other open flames.

#### ➤ Outside

If possible, move to an open area, avoiding high buildings, walls, power poles, trees and other objects that could fall. Do not run through streets

If surrounded by buildings, take shelter in nearest strong one.

If in an automobile, stop in the safest place available away from overpasses and bridges as quickly as safety permits, but stay in the vehicle until the shaking is over. Lie on the floor of the vehicle for extra protection.

## **AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE:**

- Stay tuned to the radio for instructions and information.
- Be prepared for earthquake aftershocks.
- Check involved persons for injuries. Do not attempt to move seriously injured people unless they are in immediate danger of further injury.
- Wear shoes in all areas where debris and broken glass are present.
- Turn off electricity and gas at mains. Inspect systems and appliances for damage. Do not turn on utilities until you are sure your system is safe.
- Inspect for fires and reduce fire hazards. Keep a fire extinguisher at hand. Fires following earthquakes represent an extreme hazard.
- Do not use matches or lighters until it has been established that there are no gas leaks. Do not turn light switches on and off. This creates sparks which can ignite gas from broken lines.
- Inspect buildings for structural damage and, if deemed necessary, evacuate until competent authority declares it safe to return. Stay out of severely damaged buildings; aftershocks can shake them down.
- If water pipes are damaged or if pressure drops, turn off water supply at the main valve. Water trapped in your system will provide an emergency supply through gravity flow.
- If water pressure is normal, draw a moderate quantity of water for drinking and cooking purposes in case service should be disrupted. Do not draw more than you need, as this could interfere with fire fighting. Other emergency supplies may be obtained from water heaters, toilet tanks, melted ice cubes, and canned vegetable and fruit juices.
- If connected to a municipal sewage system, do not flush toilets or use sink garbage disposals until certain that the system is functional.
- Do not eat or drink anything from open containers near shattered glass as glass contamination is possible. If their use is essential, liquids may be strained through several folds of clean cloth.
- Inspect chimneys for cracks and damage. Chimney damage could result in fire. The initial inspection should be made from a distance; approach chimneys with caution.
- Inspect closets and storage shelf areas. Open closet and cupboard doors carefully to guard against falling objects.
- Clean up spilled medicines, drugs, and other potentially harmful materials as soon as practicable.
- Do not use the telephone except to report an emergency. Use your radio to get emergency information.
- Do not heed or spread rumors - they can do great harm.
- Do not go sightseeing. Stay away from areas where buildings have collapsed or where electric wires may be down. Keep the streets clear for movement by emergency vehicles.
- Respond to requests for assistance from police, fire fighting, and relief organizations, but do not go into damaged areas unless your assistance has been requested. Full cooperation with local authorities is essential.