



PREPARE FOR SPECIFIC DISASTERS - II

Disaster Series: What To Do to Prepare for Disasters
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Tornadoes and Hurricanes Preparation



Identify a safe place to take shelter in the event of a tornado or a hurricane.



Consider building a safe room:
www.fema.gov/mit/saferoom



Listen to a NOAA Weather Radio to receive warnings.



Check for weather updates on the Internet: www.weather.gov.

During the event:

- Check on vulnerable populations: older adults, young children, or people with disabilities.
- Seek shelter: Stay away from windows and do not open them; move to the center of the room if a windowless room is unavailable; avoid places with wide-span roofs such as auditoriums; and leave mobile homes and go to the lowest floor of a nearby sturdy building.
- Leave your vehicle if you are driving. If you cannot find a secure structure, lie in a nearby ditch and cover your head and neck with your arms. Do not take shelter under an overpass or bridge. During a tornado, you are safer in a low, flat location. In a hurricane, find the best built structure available.
- Do not use open flames for light.
- Stay out of damaged buildings and away from downed power lines. Return home when the authorities say it is safe to do so.
- Help injured or trapped persons; give first aid, when appropriate, but do not try to move the seriously injured unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Call for help immediately.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, and gasoline or other flammable liquids immediately. If you smell gas or chemical fumes, open a window and quickly leave the building.
- If you see sparks, or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell hot insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker.
- If you suspect that sewage lines are damaged, avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact the water company and avoid using water from the tap.
- Take pictures of the damage – both the house and its contents – for insurance purposes.

Earthquake Preparation



Secure water heaters and gas appliances.



Repair defective electrical wiring, leaky gas, and inflexible utility connections.



Place large, heavy, or breakable objects on lower shelves and fasten shelves to walls. Fasten high and top-heavy objects. www.hudexchange.info/programs/housing-counseling/housing-counseling-disaster-recovery-toolkit.



Anchor overhead lighting fixtures.



Locate safe spots and identify danger zones in each room.



Consider buying earthquake insurance if you reside in a high-risk area.

During the event:

- If you are indoors, take cover under sturdy furniture or against an inside wall. Stay away from the kitchen.
- Stay outside if you are there. Move away from buildings, streetlights, and utility wires. Take cover under sturdy furniture away from windows and outside walls in a high-rise building. Wait for instructions from safety personnel, and do not use elevators.
- If you are driving, stop as quickly as safety permits and stay in your car. If you smell gas or hear a hissing or blowing sound, open a window and leave the building. Shut off the main gas valve outside.
- Wear sturdy shoes if walking through areas covered with fallen debris or glass.
- Check your home and chimneys for structural damage.
- Clean up spilled medicines, bleaches, and gasoline or other flammable liquids.
- Visually inspect utility lines and appliances for damage.
- Do not flush toilets until you know that sewage lines are operating.
- Open cabinets cautiously and beware of objects falling off of shelves.
- Be aware of possible high water due to dam failures. Find high ground, if necessary.

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