

Earthquakes

An earthquake is the vibration of the earth caused by sudden release of energy as subterranean plates shift positions. The largest earthquake to occur on the east coast of the United States was in Charleston in 1886. Scientists agree that where earthquakes have happened before, they will happen again. Some scientists say there is a 40 to 60 percent chance of a major earthquake in the Lowcountry over the next 25 years.

Unlike a hurricane, an earthquake comes with little or no warning. The severity of a quake can vary from a barely perceivable vibration to devastating shock waves capable of leveling large structures.

The items for repairs and rescues, as well as general supplies and foodstuffs, would be *the same as those for a hurricane*.

During An Earthquake

After an Earthquake

During an Earthquake

If you are inside:

- ◆ Stay inside.
- ◆ Watch for falling objects.
- ◆ Crawl under a sturdy table or desk, or stand in a non-glass doorway.
- ◆ Make sure that a solid wall is between you and any windows or glass doors.
- ◆ Stay away from windows, mirrors, overhead fixtures, filing cabinets, bookcases and electrical equipment.
- ◆ Remain in a protected area until it is safe to move.

Aftershocks can be just as dangerous as the first initial shock.

If you are outside:

- ◆ Move to an open area away from buildings, trees and power lines.
- ◆ If forced to stand near a building, watch for falling objects.

If you are in a vehicle:

- ◆ Stop the vehicle in the nearest open area.
- ◆ Avoid bridges and overhead wires.
- ◆ Stay in the vehicle until the shaking stops.

After an Earthquake

- ◆ Remain calm.
- ◆ If there is a fire, call 911 and report it. Fight it if you can. You may be the only one available to do so.
- ◆ Do not move the seriously injured unless they are in obvious and immediate danger.
- ◆ Open doors carefully. Watch for falling objects.
- ◆ Do not use matches or lighters. There may be gas leaks.
- ◆ Do not enter a flooded area until authorized to do so. Electrical shock may be a hazard, especially if emergency generators are operating.

Documents

- ❑ Current insurance policies and phone numbers
- ❑ Photographs of entire exterior of building
- ❑ Photographs of architectural detail of each room
- ❑ Drawing or blue print of structure with specific locations of combustible materials indicated
- ❑ Accurate electrical plans
- ❑ Mortgage records and copies of contracts
- ❑ Updated list of personal property including receipts, serial numbers, photographs and videotapes when possible
- ❑ Forms to fill out for building permits
- ❑ Phone numbers of contractors, painters, plumbers, carpenters, roofers, suppliers

Copies of these documents should be kept in more than one location (i.e. office, safety deposit box and home). Place all documents, photographs and tapes in waterproof containers. Store in highest possible spot of building.