

Living with Earthquakes



1. WHAT IS AN EARTHQUAKE?

There are different kinds of earthquakes:

- A tectonic earthquake results when rocks break and release stress.
- Earthquakes may also be caused by volcanic or other explosions, and landslides.

The released seismic energy is carried in waves that travel at very high speed, several km/sec.

Earthquake waves can cause severe shaking of the ground and buildings, especially close to the earthquake source.

Some earthquakes can cause tsunamis.

2. WHAT TO DO DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

a) If you are inside a building;

- Stay indoors.
- Keep calm and do not panic.
- Let doors open to avoid being jammed shut.
- Keep away from windows.
- Take cover in a doorway or under a strong table.

b) If you are outside a building;

- The safest places are open areas. If in an open area, stay there until shaking stops.
- Do not approach weak buildings, or trees or power poles.
- If in a vehicle, stop in an open area as quickly as safety permits.

3. AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE

- If the building you are in is seriously damaged, turn off electricity and gas.
- Put out any fires.
- Treat minor injuries.
- Contact neighbours – they may need help.
- Keep alert – strong aftershocks are possible.
- Remember that a strong earthquake may generate a tsunami – take appropriate action.

4. EARTHQUAKE EMERGENCY PLANNING

Have a small earthquake emergency kit ready at all times. The earthquake emergency kit should include a small radio, torches and batteries, and a small amount of basic medicine, food and water.

For more information, contact:

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