

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS FAQs

1. What quantity of supplies should I have on hand?

The standard guideline has been to plan on storing enough supplies for everyone in your family for at least 72 hours. But thinking about preparing for the Cascadia event experts are now encouraging us to store supplies for up to two weeks. www.ready.gov/build-a-kit

2. What is the best way to go about retrofitting a home?

Guidance on strengthening new and existing homes:

- [Homebuilders' Guide to Earthquake Resistant Design and Construction \(FEMA 232\)](#)
- [Earthquake Safety Guide for Homeowners \(FEMA 530\)](#)

Guidance on securing the contents of your home:

- [Earthquake Home Hazard Hunt poster \(FEMA 528\)](#)
- [Reducing the Risks of Nonstructural Earthquake Damage—A Practical Guide, Fourth Edition \(FEMA E-74\)](#)

3. Dam failure & flooding - How likely is this in the aftermath of a major earthquake?

Information courtesy of Lane County Emergency Management (8/4/15)

1. Dams were built to the design standards of their day, using the best available information of the time, to withstand significant earthquakes or other seismic events specific to their locations.
2. Despite that uncertainty, the historical performance of dams in seismic events has been exceptionally good:
 - a. Generally, concrete dams have performed very well, sustaining only minor damage.
 - b. Only about 1.5 percent of historical failures of embankment dams have been attributed to earthquakes.
 - c. The only known complete dam failures as a result of seismic shaking were tailings or hydraulic fill dams, or other relatively small earthfill embankments of older and possibly inadequate design and construction.
 - d. For Example:
 - i. The March 11, 2011, 9.0 earthquake in Japan was basically the western Pacific equivalent of a Cascadia event. One small irrigation dam completely failed; of 252 dams inspected the next day, six embankment dams had shallow cracks on their crests. All damaged dams were functioning with no problems.
 - ii. The February 27, 2010, earthquake in Chile was basically the South American equivalent of a Cascadia event. No embankment dams failed and only a few suffered more than minor damage.
3. For more information, contact the Lane County Emergency Management program:
[Lane County Emergency Management Program Website](#)

4. How can I prepare children for a disaster?

FEMA has some good resources for disaster preparedness for children: <http://www.ready.gov/kids>

5. What are the recommendations for getting to higher ground in case of a tsunami after the earthquake?

The tsunami threat is only on the coast. The State of Oregon has placed signage along the coastal highways indicating when you are entering or leaving a tsunami inundation zone. It is recommended that you have an understanding of where those zones are when you visit the coast and put a simple plan together of how you will get to higher ground. Tsunamis may start arriving within 15-20 minutes of the initial ground shaking.

6. Is earthquake insurance/flood insurance worth getting?

Homeowners should explore whether or not insurance would be beneficial. Earthquake and flood are not covered by standard homeowner's policies. Earthquake insurance deductibles can be 10-15% of the dwelling's value. Insurance can also cover the costs of temporary housing should you need temporary housing following the earthquake.

7. Is it better to stay in a building or get out—does that vary by building?

The best practice during an earthquake is to drop, cover and hold on until the ground stops shaking. In past earthquakes, the majority of injuries occurred when people tried to evacuate a building while the ground is shaking. Once the earthquake is over, you should grab your belongings and evacuate the building.

8. What kind of measures can we take to prepare to shelter in place in case the bridges are out, and we can't get home from work?

You can create a simple go kit at work that would provide for basic needs for a few hours or overnight (e.g., bottled water, snacks, flashlight, gloves, sturdy shoes, etc). This can be in a backpack stored in a car or under a desk.

9. What places in the community will serve as distribution centers for food, water and blankets for those who do not have access to those things?

Points of distribution will be established in various locations around the County following an earthquake. Because we will not know the full extent of the impacts until the earthquake, it is difficult to advertise locations ahead of time. Public information will be disseminated about locations that are being set up.

10. Where should Eugene residents go if their home isn't safe after an earthquake?

Emergency shelters will be established following the earthquake. The locations of those shelters will be publicized following the incident when sites have been assessed. You may also talk to family member or friends in town about planning to host one another if one of you should find yourselves not able to stay in your home.

In addition to stocking supplies at home, residents are encouraged to have a "go kit" with supplies that can be easily retrieved from home and carried on foot for some distance. This will provide a family with flexibility and security if their home isn't safe for occupation after a seismic event.

11. Which bridges are likely to be safe after a big earthquake?

It is difficult to say with any precision what bridges will be standing after a seismic event. Bridges will be evaluated as soon as possible following an earthquake so that relief supplies can be safely transported to where they are needed most.

The State of Oregon conducted an assessment of state owned bridges in 2009 and has been working on retrofits for several years. That study can be accessed on the following link:

http://www.oregon.gov/ODOT/TD/TP_RES/docs/reports/2009/2009_seismic_vulnerability.pdf

The Cities of Eugene and Springfield are also in the process of conducting seismic assessments of city owned bridges.

12. Will it be important to have the ability to filter water?

Yes, the state anticipates the potential for significant disruption to local water distribution systems. The Centers for Disease Control has developed several resources about safe drinking water:

http://www.cdc.gov/healthywater/emergency/safe_water/personal.html

If a seismic event is significant enough to break water pipes, it will likely be significant enough to break other pipes, too. Following a seismic event, surface waters like rivers and ponds may be contaminated with wastewater, untreated stormwater, or toxic spills and should be carefully evaluated before they are used for drinking. Filtration and purification will be essential to maintaining health and preventing the spread of disease.

13. How can we find a list of earthquake mitigation contractors (for homes)?

As a public entity, the City cannot recommend contractors for seismic work on homes. The best approach would be to contact general contractors in your area to see if they do this type of work and check the contractor's references.

14. What should I consider living in the country with well water?

Recommended emergency preparedness is consistent for both in town and rural homes. Disruption to electrical supplies may impair your ability to pump well water. Store an accessible supply of filtered water – a minimum of one gallon per person per day, and don't forget your animals. Prepare an emergency supply kit, ensure the family develops an emergency communications plan, and get to know your neighbors.

15. Could community members be trained to help our Community in an Emergency response?

The City of Eugene sponsors the Eugene-Springfield Community Emergency Response Team training for community members in the Eugene/Springfield area. For more information on CERT volunteer training can be found on the City of Eugene website: go to the City of Eugene Emergency Management: [Eugene-Springfield CERT](#)

For More Information:

[City of Eugene Emergency Management Program](#)

www.Ready.gov