

# **SOME COMMON SENSE ADVICE ABOUT EARTHQUAKES**

## **How to Prepare Personally**

Be familiar with all exits in buildings you frequent. Know where fire extinguishers are and how to use them. Keep on hand (in car, room or office) items such as:

- Water and some emergency food rations.
- Space blanket or warm clothing.
- Plastic bags, toilet paper, towelettes and other items for sanitation purposes.
- First aid supplies and needed medications (these must be properly safeguarded).
- Flashlight and radio with batteries or purchase hand crank or solar charging types.
- Comfortable shoes or boots to replace dress type shoes.
- Books, cards or other items that will help relax you.
- Commercially produced disaster kits are available from local suppliers (on campus the day of the disaster drills) and can be supplemented with other items.

Prepare yourself and your family so they will know what to do, where to go, and how to cope until you are able to get home (could be several days). Have an out-of-state contact (relative or friend's phone number) to communicate with others by phone because local calls will probably not be possible for many days.

## **What to Expect**

- Everything shakes and rattles.
- There will be a lot of noise.
- Things will fall and break (such as ceiling tile, light fixtures, file cabinets, desks, computers, unsecured bookcases, wall hangings, mechanical equipment, etc.).
- The motion will be severe - if you are standing, you may be thrown to the ground.
- Most things will stop working (lights, telephones, computers, elevators, heating and air conditioning, gas and water supplies may be cut off, etc.).
- Windows will probably break, shattering glass into and around buildings, creating a life threatening situation for people running out of buildings.
- Fires started by electrical short-circuits may well be fed by broken natural gas lines. These fires may burn out of control for lack of water, equipment and trained persons to fight them.
- Buildings may collapse partially or totally. There could be injuries and deaths.

## **What to Do**

- Remain calm. Don't panic or run (death or serious injury could result if you are hit by falling debris). Count to yourself or reassure others around you - the shaking will eventually stop.
- Duck, cover and hold onto the legs of a desk or chair so you stay protected under it; or stand in an architecturally strong part of the room away from glass and falling items. If you stand in a doorway, you may be beaten by the door if you don't take appropriate precautions.
- If you are inside, stay there. If you are outside, stay there but avoid standing near buildings and power poles. If you are driving, pull cautiously to the side of the road in as clear a place as possible and stay in the car.

## **After the Earthquake**

1. Don't panic. Stop and take time to think. Be prepared for aftershocks.
2. Do not light matches, cigarettes, or turn on lights or machines - you could ignite a fire.
3. Report to your Building or Floor Monitor (anyone capable of acting in this capacity). If evacuation of the building is necessary proceed to assembly points via safe exits and sign in.
4. Respond to assignments from Campus Safety - involving rescue and survival operations.
5. Do not use telephones. Too many calls will crash the system.
6. Employees: If you are at home when the quake hits - insure the safety of your family. Then report to Campus Safety on campus if you are within walking or short biking distance. Your skills will be needed to assist people on campus. Prepare your home/family ahead of time. Participate in training.