



EARTHQUAKES

Indiana is near two major seismic zones, and, as recent as 2017, earthquake activity has been recorded in the area. Scientists expect incidents similar to the 1811–1812 New Madrid earthquakes will [impact Indiana again](#). These natural disasters cannot be prevented, so preparedness is vital.

BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE

Earthquakes occur at any time and season without any notice. Be ready for every stage of the incident by taking the time to prepare before an emergency.

- Create a waterproof disaster kit. The kit should support each person a minimum of seven days.
- Create a list of emergency phone numbers.
- Designate a meeting place away from the home and any collapsible structures.
- Earthquakes can occur any time of the day. Plan ahead for addressing an emergency during a work or school day.
- Create and practice a household reunification plan. Include designated contact information and a meeting location.
- Learn how to turn off water, gas and electricity supplies to the home from the main shut-off valve or switch. Contact the local utility company on how to properly turn off the lines.
- Practice [Drop, Cover and Hold On](#) with every household member and co-worker.
- Place heavy objects on low shelves and light objects on top shelves.
- Secure heavy furniture such as bookcases, hanging TVs, kitchen appliances, air conditioners, furnaces and water heaters. Wall anchors are now commercially available and easy to install.
- If possible, have walls, chimneys, windows and foundations reinforced. Stronger structures better withstand the shocks of an earthquake.
- Consider purchasing earthquake insurance policies for homes, rental properties and businesses. Insurance coverage and prices can vary.

DURING AN EARTHQUAKE

Remembering to Drop, Cover and Hold On when an earthquake begins is important, but staying safe is possible if that process cannot be followed.

- Take shelter under sturdy furniture and hold onto it. The furniture will help protect against any falling debris.
- Cover the head and neck with arms.
- If outside, stay away from power lines, tall buildings, falling rocks or anything that could collapse.
- If in a vehicle, drive slowly to a location away from buildings, overpasses, underpasses and utility wires.
- If in a building or enclosed structure, never go outside.

AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

The time following an earthquake can be dangerous because of potential fires, damaged buildings and other hazards. Broken glass and debris also create major concerns for potential injuries.

- Be prepared for aftershocks, smaller earthquakes that can follow for days to years after the main earthquake.
- Never use elevators to evacuate a building. If the power goes out, occupants will be trapped.
- Monitor local news radio, TV or social media postings for additional information or instructions from local officials.
- To prevent additional injuries or fatalities, do not re-enter a building with structural damage.
- If there is a hissing sound or smell of gas, immediately leave the area.
- Phone calls should be saved for emergencies. Phone wires may be damaged and have limited access.
- Check for injuries and care for those seriously injured.

