EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS

EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS CHECKLIST

Most people would associate the risk of earthquakes with well-publicized and seismically active areas like California, parts of Washington State, and some areas of Nevada and Utah. However, the risk of earthquakes covers a much larger area of the United States and Canada.

The following checklist covers some basic points to consider in preparing for an earthquake, which will help you recover more effectively in the aftermath. In the event of an earthquake, these steps will prove vital in minimizing any damage to your business and resources.

✓ Before the Earthquake

☐ Be aware of your risk level. Add a map to your Preparedness Plan and make sure everyone is aware of the earthquake risk level in your region.

☐ Think about communications, since the phone company and cell towers may go down. Your disaster recovery/response team will need to be in immediate contact with one another to ensure that your plan is activated and moving forward as quickly as possible. Think about two- way radios or text messages. An Alert Notification System is also an invaluable communication resource.

☐ Develop a plan around communication, and deliver this to your team. Be sure to clearly identify each individual's roles and responsibility prior to the earthquake.

☐ Implement structural and non-structural hazard mitigation actions: bolting furniture to walls, ensure hardware and technology are secure, safety latches for cabinet doors, install fire sprinklers, use hook and loop fasteners to keep computers and other equipment from falling.

☐ Discuss coverage with your insurance provider. Understand your extra expense and business interruption policies before the interruption occurs.

☐ Contact your property owner or facilities manager and ask about having a laminate or plastic film placed on the inside of the windows to prevent glass shattering and endangering employees.

☐ Assemble and store emergency supply kit- for 3 days minimum.

☐ Assemble building site maps and floor plans identifying exits, fire escapes, stairways, utility valves and shutoffs, fire extinguishers, hydrants, and standpipes, hazardous materials, and locked or restricted areas. Include these in your plan.

☐ Prepare your building for an extensive power outage and look at power options, particularly generator requirements.

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☐ Review your current data backup procedures and consider contracting with a data center or colocation facility that is in a different part of the country (one not prone to earthquakes, hurricanes or any other kind of aggressive natural events). Back up all your data to them on a daily (or at least every other day) basis, so that in the event you lose your networks and servers you can be back up and running and restoring your saved data to replacement equipment.

☐ Practice the below 'During the Earthquake' items regularly with new and existing employees.

✓ During the Earthquake

☐ **If you are indoors,** duck or drop down to the floor. Take cover under a sturdy desk, table or other furniture. Hold on to it and be prepared to move with it. Hold the position until the ground stops shaking and it is safe to move. Stay clear of windows, fireplaces, woodstoves, and heavy furniture or appliances that may fall over. Stay inside to avoid being injured by falling glass or building parts. If you are in a crowded area, take cover where you are. Stay calm and encourage others to do likewise.

☐ **If you are outside,** get into the open, away from buildings and power lines.

☐ **If you are driving,** stop if it is safe, but stay inside your car. Stay away from bridges, overpasses and tunnels. Move your car as far out of the normal traffic pattern as possible. If possible, avoid stopping under trees, light posts, power lines, or signs.

☐ **If you are in a mountainous area,** or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for falling rock and other debris that could be loosened by the earthquake.

☐ **If you are at the beach,** move quickly to higher ground or several hundred yards inland.

✓ After the Earthquake

☐ Employees should immediately check for injuries among fellow workers and render first aid. Seriously injured persons should not be moved unless they are in danger of further injury.

☐ Check for fire hazards, gas leaks, or damaged electrical wiring. Make sure main valves are turned off.

☐ Use flashlights (in emergency supply kit) vs. matches/lighters, due to potential gas leaks.

☐ Be prepared for aftershocks – these can come for several days after the main quake and can frequently topple already weakened structures.

☐ Consider relocation during recovery, depending upon damage to structure.

☐ Bring all vital records with you to your recovery site: data, employee lists, vendor lists, etc.
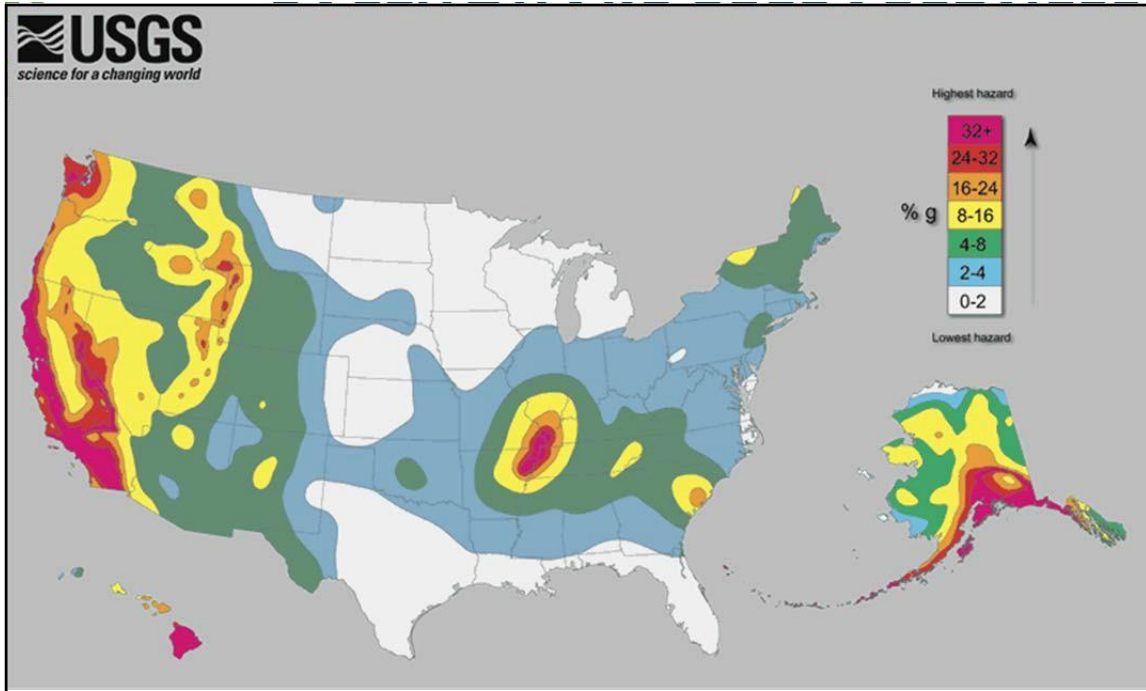
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✓ Your People

☐ Ensure you have an emergency communication plan in place prior to the earthquake and that employees are aware of their part in the plan

☐ Determine who is certified in CERT, CPR, etc. and what their responsibilities will be in the event of an earthquake.

☐ Use an Alert Notification System or internal employee hotline to keep all employees posted on status and next steps.

☐ During evacuation have a central point of contact for all employees, and ensure you know where your people are located.

☐ During evacuation consider your phones lines- redirection to cell phones, answering service, Google Voice, or Agility lines could be critical.

☐ Following the earthquake, notify all critical people of next steps, based on damage.

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Earthquakes are measured by the Richter magnitude scale. This is used to express the level of seismic energy released by the earthquake. The scale is theoretically limitless, although the highest magnitude so far recorded was 9.5 in 1960.

Intensity Scale	Description	Effects
Less than 2	Micro	Not felt
2-3	Very Minor	Not felt but recorded
3-4	Minor	Often felt, no damage
4-5	Light	Shaking observed
5-6	Moderate	Some damage
6-7	Strong	Damaging over a 100-mile area
7-8	Major	Serious damage over wider area
Greater than 8	Great	Serious damage over several hundred miles