



Tips to prepare for an earthquake:

Before an earthquake event:

- If your county offers this, sign up for mobile alerts from your county officials in order to receive text messages during emergency events.
- Go through your facility and identify hazards, such as objects that are likely to break, fall over, and/or cause injury to people or animals. Remove, fasten, or latch these objects and bolt down large appliances (e.g. - refrigerators and water heaters), if possible. Remove any hanging objects on walls above animal kennels and strap down any stacked items, such as totes and boxes.
- Identify safe spaces in your facility for your staff and volunteers. This could be against a wall in an interior room, away from windows, or under sturdy furniture like desks or tables, or it could be an outdoor area away from any structures, power lines, or anything else likely to fall during a quake.
- Because these events often come without warning, it is important to regularly practice drills with your staff and volunteers. Be sure to identify several options for evacuation from your facility after the event as some routes, such as doorway entrances, may become inaccessible.
- Consider placing collars or microchipping animals with your organization's contact information in the event of separation.
- If applicable, check on insurance policies ahead of time to determine coverage in the event the property is impacted by the earthquake.
- Develop an essential supplies kit that you can easily access should you need to evacuate. The kit should consist of items for both humans and animals such as, hand-crank or battery-operated flashlights and radio, leashes, muzzles, foldable crates or even pillowcases for cats, pet and human first aid kits, etc., in the event you can evacuate with any of the animals. *Identify the local emergency radio station call number to receive the latest updates on the event.*
- Consider facility updates if your building has structural issues that make it vulnerable to collapse during an earthquake.
- Establish where you can relocate your animals to if your shelter is impacted and no longer operational. Cultivate relationships with other shelters, rescues or ranchers in your region and across your state that might have the space and capacity to temporarily care for your animals.
- Understand your capacity with regard to vehicles, equipment, supplies, to move your animals. Identify and procure or partner with others who have additional supplies and vehicles to assist with the physical transport, if needed.
- Due to potential secondary threats, such as, tsunamis, take note of where tsunami evacuation routes are, if your shelter is in or around a coastal area. If there are none, establish various evacuation routes in case of road inaccessibility.
- Establish a secondary mechanism to keep you and your team in communication. Local phone lines and cell phones may not be available. Walkie talkie usage may work but check with local authorities to make sure it does not cause interference.

At the first sign of shaking due to an earthquake:

- If inside, **drop** to the ground, take **cover** by getting under a sturdy table or other piece of furniture, and **hold** on until the shaking stops. If outside, stay outside and head to an open space. Utilize your radio and tune into your emergency radio channel to hear updates.
- Identify actions you need to take in your organization's emergency plan. If a plan for your organization does not yet exist, follow the steps in the [Best Friends Emergency Preparedness Toolkit](#) to get started.
- In the event of aftershocks, try to place animals in crates and under sturdy pieces of furniture like heavy desks or tables, or even against interior walls, away from windows or any objects that may fall.
- If the building is damaged during the event, once shaking stops, access your essential kit and utilize the time that you have to gather people and animals and quickly move away from the building.

After an earthquake event:

- Remain cautious when venturing outside to assess damage. Gas and power lines may be down and can add a secondary hazard to humans and animals.
- Expect additional earthquakes and aftershocks to follow an initial earthquake. Be prepared to drop, cover, and hold again in the event of an aftershock.
- If you are in an area that may experience tsunamis, heed sirens and/or warnings and evacuate immediately by heading inland or to higher ground.
- Depending on the level of impact experienced by the earthquake, you may need to search for some lost animals that were displaced by the event. Hopefully, your animals are microchipped or collared with information, but if not, start alerting members in the community to be on the lookout for any missing animals from your facility.
- Be mindful that there may be secondary challenges such as, boil water advisories and long-lasting power outages in your area as a result. Follow the [tip sheet on power outages](#) to learn more.