



City of Menifee Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Emergency Preparedness Information Sessions – 7/23/2019

Last Updated 7/24/2019

New. Better. Best.

Earthquakes FAQ

(Source: <https://earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/faq.php>)

Can you predict earthquakes?

No. Neither the USGS nor any other scientists have ever predicted a major earthquake. We do not know how, and we do not expect to know how any time in the foreseeable future.

Is there earthquake weather?

There is no such thing as "earthquake weather". Statistically, there is approximately an equal distribution of earthquakes in cold weather, hot weather, rainy weather, etc. Very large low-pressure changes associated with major storm systems (typhoons, hurricanes, etc) are known to trigger episodes of fault slip (slow earthquakes) in the Earth's crust and may also play a role in triggering some damaging earthquakes. However, the numbers are small and are not statistically significant

At what magnitude does damage begin to occur in an earthquake?

It isn't that simple. There is not one [magnitude](#) above which damage will occur. It depends on other variables, such as the distance from the earthquake, what type of soil you are on, etc. That being said, damage does not usually occur until the earthquake magnitude reaches somewhere above 4 or 5.

What can I do to be prepared for an earthquake?

There are four basic steps you can take to be more prepared for an earthquake:

Step 1:

[Secure your space](#) by identifying hazards and securing moveable items.

Step 2:

[Plan to be safe](#) by creating a disaster plan and deciding how you will communicate in an emergency.

Step 3:

[Organize disaster supplies](#) in convenient locations.

Step 4:

[Minimize financial hardship](#) by organizing important documents, strengthening your property, and considering insurance.

These are recommended by the [Earthquake Country Alliance](#), in which USGS is a partner

What should I do DURING an earthquake?

- If you are INDOORS -- STAY THERE! Get under a desk or table and hang on to it ([Drop, Cover, and Hold on!](#)) or move into a hallway or against an inside wall.



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STAY CLEAR of windows, fireplaces, and heavy furniture or appliances. GET OUT of the kitchen, which is a dangerous place (things can fall on you). DON'T run downstairs or rush outside while the building is shaking or while there is danger of falling and hurting yourself or being hit by falling glass or debris.

- If you are OUTSIDE -- get into the OPEN, away from buildings, power lines, chimneys, and anything else that might fall on you.
- If you are DRIVING -- stop, but carefully. Move your car as far out of traffic as possible. DO NOT stop on or under a bridge or overpass or under trees, light posts, power lines, or signs. STAY INSIDE your car until the shaking stops. When you RESUME driving, watch for breaks in the pavement, fallen rocks, and bumps in the road at bridge approaches.
- If you are in a MOUNTAINOUS AREA -- watch out for falling rock, landslides, trees, and other debris that could be loosened by quakes.
- If you are near the OCEAN - see [these safety rules](#) from NOAA's Tsunami Warning Center.

What should I NOT do during an earthquake?

1. DO NOT turn on the gas again if you turned it off; let the gas company do it
2. DO NOT use matches, lighters, camp stoves or barbecues, electrical equipment, appliances UNTIL you are sure there are no gas leaks. They may create a spark that could ignite leaking gas and cause an explosion and fire
3. DO NOT use your telephone, EXCEPT for a medical or fire emergency. You could tie up the lines needed for emergency response. If the phone doesn't work send someone for help
4. DO NOT expect firefighters, police or paramedics to help you. They may not be available.

What do I do AFTER an earthquake?

WEAR STURDY SHOES to avoid injury from broken glass and debris. Expect aftershocks

CHECK FOR INJURIES

- If a person is bleeding, put direct pressure on the wound, use clean gauze or cloth if available
- If a person is not breathing administer CPR
- DO NOT attempt to move seriously injured persons unless they are in further danger of injury
- COVER injured persons with blankets to keep warm
- SEEK medical help for serious injuries

CHECK FOR HAZARDS

- Fire hazards--put out fires in your home or neighborhood immediately, call for help



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- Gas leaks--shut off main gas valve ONLY if you suspect a leak because of broken pipes or odor
- Damaged electrical wiring--Shut off power at the control box if there is any danger to house wiring
- Downed or damaged utility lines--do not touch downed power lines or any objects in contact with them
- SPILLS--clean up any spilled medicines, drugs, or other harmful materials such as bleach, lye, gas
- DOWNED OR DAMAGED CHIMNEYS--Approach with caution--don't use damaged chimney (it could start a fire or let poisonous gases into your house)
- FALLEN ITEMS--beware of items tumbling off shelves when you open doors of closets and cupboards
- CHECK FOOD AND WATER SUPPLIES--Do not eat or drink anything from open containers near shattered glass
- If power is off, plan meals to use up foods that will spoil quickly or frozen foods (food in the freezer should be good for at least a couple of days)
- Don't light your kitchen stove if you suspect a gas leak
- USE BBQ or camp stoves, outdoors only for emergency cooking
- If your water is off you can drink supplies from water heaters, melted ice cubes or canned vegetables (AVOID drinking water from swimming pools or especially spas--it may have too many chemicals in it to be safe)

Should I hide in a tub during an earthquake?

No, get under a desk or table and hang on to it (Drop, Cover, and Hold on!) or move into a hallway or against an inside wall. STAY CLEAR of windows, fireplaces, and heavy furniture or appliances. GET OUT of the kitchen, which is a dangerous place (things can fall on you). DON'T run downstairs or rush outside while the building is shaking or while there is danger of falling and hurting yourself or being hit by falling glass or debris.

Should I stand in a doorway during an earthquake?

The American Red Cross has not recommended use of a doorway for earthquake protection for more than a decade. The problem is that many doorways are not built into the structural integrity of a building, and may not offer protection. Also, simply put, doorways are not suitable for more than one person at a time. During an earthquake, Get under a desk or table and hang on to it ([Drop, Cover, and Hold on!](#)) or move into a hallway or against an inside wall. STAY CLEAR of windows, fireplaces, and heavy furniture or appliances. GET OUT of the kitchen, which is a dangerous place (things can fall on you). DON'T run downstairs or rush outside while the building is shaking or while there is danger of falling and hurting yourself or being hit by falling glass or debris.

Flooding FAQ

(Source: <https://www.nssl.noaa.gov/education/svrwx101/floods/faq/>)

If I drive a pickup or a large SUV, why can't I drive through flood water?

As little as 6" of fast moving water can sweep most any vehicle off a roadway. Besides, you can't determine the condition of the road bed under the water. The road could be washed out, or the water could be hiding a huge sinkhole.

Is flooding really that big of a deal?

Flooding causes more damage in the United States than any other severe weather related event, an average of \$5 billion a year. Flooding can occur in any of the 50 states or U.S. territories at any time of the year.

How can I find out if I am in danger from a flood?

[NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards](#) is one of the best ways to receive warnings from the National Weather Service. NOAA Weather Radio All Hazards is a nationwide network of radio stations broadcasting continuous weather and river information direct from nearby NWS offices. Also, [the NWS web site provides forecasts and warnings, and identifies where flooding is occurring](#).

How do I know how severe a flood will be?

Once a river reaches flood stage, the flood severity categories used by the NWS include minor flooding, moderate flooding, and major flooding. Each category has a definition based on property damage and public threat.

- **Minor Flooding**—minimal or no property damage, but possibly some public threat or inconvenience
- **Moderate Flooding**—some inundation of structures and roads near streams. Some evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations are necessary.
- **Major Flooding**—extensive inundation of structures and roads. Significant evacuations of people and/or transfer of property to higher elevations.

Wildfire FAQ

(Source: <https://www.fema.gov/wildfire-mitigation-faqs-and-resources>)

What steps can I take to protect my property against wildfires?

Key protective actions include creating a defensible space around your home, using fire-resistant building materials, and regularly clearing combustibles around your home that could serve as fuel for a wildfire. Three good resources with detailed information on how to mitigate are:

- [FireWise Wildfire Preparedness Materials](#)
- [Protect your Property from Wildfire: Regional Editions](#)-a comprehensive mitigation guide that includes state-specific information, such as native fire-resistant vegetation to plant around your home.
- FEMA's Technical Fact Sheet Series, [A Home Builder's Guide to Construction in Wildfire Zones](#).

To prepare yourself and your family for a variety of natural disasters, you should [Build an Emergency Kit](#) and make a [Family Communications Plan](#).