



IDAHO DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH & WELFARE

Joint Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security/Idaho Department of Health and Welfare News Release

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Contact: Bureau of Homeland Security, Robert Feeley, (208) 422-3033
Health and Welfare, Tom Shanahan, (208) 334-0668

Earthquake in Japan Highlights Importance of Earthquake Preparedness

News following Japan's devastating earthquake and tsunamis shows how important it is to be prepared for an emergency. The Pacific Northwest is earthquake country, with much of Idaho's beauty formed by the seismic forces beneath our feet.

Being ready for an earthquake not only includes stocking up with food, water and emergency supplies, but also learning and practicing what to do during and after the shaking stops. The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security and the Idaho Geological Survey have developed a comprehensive guide to help people prepare and survive an earthquake titled, "Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country." The guide is available from the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security website, or can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

The handbook includes helpful information that includes:

Things to do today:

- Prepare a disaster kit that includes a 3-5 day supply of food and water for your family. It also should contain emergency first aid supplies, emergency cash, a battery powered radio, and pet food.
- Make a disaster plan for your family and practice an earthquake drill together. Do all family members know where to gather, who to contact if family members are separated, or where utility shut-offs are if your home is heavily damaged?
- Assess your home for furniture and unsecured items that may fall during an earthquake. Put flexible pipes on your water heater, and strap it to the wall so it does not tip over.

What to do during an earthquake: "Drop, Cover and Hold On"

- If you are indoors at home, shelter under a desk or table, or drop to floor next to an interior wall, protecting your head and neck with your arms. Don't go outside until well after the shaking stops.

- If you are at work, avoid windows and do not use elevators.
- If you are outdoors, move to a clear area and avoid buildings, power lines or other hazards. Assume fallen power lines are live. If you are driving, pull over and set the parking brake, avoid bridges, overpasses and signs.

After an earthquake:

- Provide first-aid to people who are injured; protect your mouth, nose and eyes from dust.
- Assess your home or business for damage that may cause or lead to fires or hazards. Don't re-enter your home unless you know it is safe. Check for gas leaks or electrical hazards. Unplug broken or toppled light fixtures or appliances.
- Tune your car or portable radio to safety advisories.

Note to reporters: The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security is the State of Idaho's emergency management agency. Please note that Idaho BHS is an Idaho-specific agency, and it is not the same thing as the federal Department of Homeland Security. Within the State of Idaho organizational chart, Idaho BHS is aligned under the State of Idaho Military Division.

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Editors: For media interviews or more information about earthquake preparedness and surviving an earthquake, please contact Robert Feeley at 208-422-3033.