

We often think of emergency preparedness in terms of environmental and industrial threats. Sometimes we forget that we may have a lot of hazards in our own homes that can make your home a more dangerous place in the event of such a disaster. Take a look at our Home Hazard Hunt to help you identify potential problems, and make your home safer.

HOME HAZARD HUNT

LOOKING OUT FOR HOME HAZARDS PART OF YOUR FAMILY EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN



Windows	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Broken and flying glass is the fingerprint of an earthquake. BEWARE! <input type="checkbox"/> Consider replacing glass with safety glass or adding a protective film. <input type="checkbox"/> Locate beds away from windows.
Window Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for hanging plants or lighting fixtures which are near windows. <input type="checkbox"/> In an earthquake they could swing and break the glass. Move to a safer location or fasten securely.

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Furniture on Wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Items such as stereo stands and portable dishwashers can become large moving projectiles which could cause serious damage. They should be firmly secured.
Tall Furniture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for top-heavy, freestanding furniture, like bookcases or china cabinets, which could topple in an earthquake. <input type="checkbox"/> Anything over 3 feet high could be a problem. <input type="checkbox"/> Secure with commercially available devices.
Blocked Exits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Move large furniture away from exits or secure firmly to prevent possible blocking of exits.
Heavy Objects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for heavy or breakable or valuable objects on high shelves or in cabinets. These should be secured or moved to lower locations.
Mirrors & Pictures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for mirrors, heavily framed pictures, etc. which are placed over beds, couches or chairs. These can be relocated or re-anchored securely.
Major Appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for heavy appliances which could move enough to rupture gas lines or damage electrical cables. <input type="checkbox"/> These can be securely fastened. <input type="checkbox"/> Longer, flexible gas connectors and electrical cords long enough to allow for movement should be installed - but only by qualified personnel.
Electronic Appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for electronic equipment, like stereos, televisions, computers, or appliances, (like microwave ovens, which may slide off shelves or out of cabinets. Secure with double-sided tape, Velcro fasteners, or put restraining edges on the cabinets or shelves.
Counter-top Cooking Appliances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for counter top appliances which generate heat (like toasters, coffeepots or bread makers). Put restraining edges on cabinets or shelves. Do not use tape or Velcro - the glue will melt.
Cabinets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Look for latches on kitchen, bathroom and storage cabinets which would not hold doors closed during heavy shaking. These can be secured with hooks or better latches.
Utility Shut Offs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Know where your gas, electric and water shut offs are located. <input type="checkbox"/> Everyone should know how to turn off the utilities in case of a leak or problem. <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure that the gas and water valves are not rusted or stuck shut. If they are, call a professional. <input type="checkbox"/> Keep a suitable wrench close to the gas meter.

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Foundations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Inspect the foundations of your home.<input type="checkbox"/> Walls must be securely bolted to the foundations - If they are not, consider having this done. An unbolted structure may move off its foundation during an earthquake.
Chimneys and Roofs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Check your chimney and roof for loose tiles and bricks.<input type="checkbox"/> Remove or replace tiles as necessary and strengthen the roof around the chimney.
Toxic Chemicals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Look for poisons, toxins, or solvents in breakable containers which are located in high or dangerous locations. These can be moved to a safe, well-ventilated storage area.<input type="checkbox"/> Make sure they are kept away from emergency water and out of reach of children or pets.<input type="checkbox"/> Check with Provincial Waste Management for information about safe storage.
Trees in the Yard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Old leaning trees can fall during earthquakes. Check for signs of root rot or other damage.<input type="checkbox"/> Trees in close proximity to the house can be a fire hazard. Consider pruning or removal.
Local Hazards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="checkbox"/> Look for hazards outside your home, such as overhead wires or stream banks that may not be stable. You may not be able to do anything about these hazards but you and your family should be aware that they exist.