

**ESP FOCUS****Then and Now****Earthquakes**

We have learned a great deal about earthquakes since the magnitude 7.8 San Francisco earthquake of April 18, 1906 which ranks as one of the most significant earthquakes of all time. It was one of the most devastating in the history of California. The earthquake and resulting fires caused an estimated 3,000 deaths and \$524 million in property loss (in 1906 dollars!). The shaking in San Francisco was felt for about 1 minute. The fires that ignited soon after the earthquake quickly raged through the city due to damage to the water system needed to control them. The fires destroyed a large part of San Francisco.

Today, the 1906 earthquake's importance comes more from the wealth of scientific knowledge learned than from its size and damage. The earthquake surprised geologists of the time with its large horizontal displacements and great rupture length of over 250 miles. The earthquake was felt

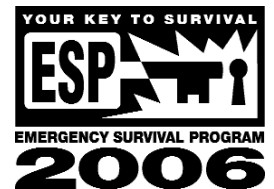
from southern Oregon to Los Angeles, California and as far inland as central Nevada. The earthquake brought new attention to the destructive potential of earthquakes in California, and launched modern earthquake science and engineering. Even in our modern age when other threats may seem more destructive, earthquakes have remained the greatest threat for California because of their frequency and potential for widespread devastation.

**Terrorism**

Before the devastating events of September 11, 2001, we didn't know as much as we do today about terrorism. Many Americans believed that terrorism only affected other countries. Now we know that it can happen here, but we don't know when or where. Much of the fear caused by terrorism – or the threat of it – is based on this uncertainty: not knowing whether it will hurt us or our loved ones directly, or whether it will target our own community or workplace. However, the terrorists are not in charge. Governmental officials are working hard to find terrorists and to limit their ability to harm us. At the same time, there is a lot that each of us can do to limit the terrorists' ability to frighten us.

**Check these websites**

- [www.dhs.gov](http://www.dhs.gov) (United States Department of Homeland Security)
- [www.espfocus.org](http://www.espfocus.org) (Emergency Survival Program)
- [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov) (Federal Emergency Management Agency)
- [www.scec.org](http://www.scec.org) (Southern California Earthquake Center)
- [www.usgs.gov](http://www.usgs.gov) (United States Geological Survey)

**J A N U A R Y**[www.espfocus.org](http://www.espfocus.org)

## What You Can Do Now

Preparing for any disaster such as earthquakes, fires, floods and terrorism is basically the same. It all starts with a family emergency plan.

- Evacuation:** Whether you are at home, at work, or in a public place, think of how you could leave quickly and safely. Locate stairways and emergency exits. Pay attention to posted evacuation signs in buildings, subways and crowded public areas.
- Out-of-state contact:** Think how you will get in contact with your family if you become separated. Choose an out-of-state contact that your family members or friends can call to check on each other. Provide all family members with a paper list of important contact phone numbers.
- Meeting place:** Decide where you and family members will meet if the emergency affects your home, or if officials have to evacuate your neighborhood.
- School plans:** Know the emergency plans at your children's schools, and make sure the school has your updated emergency contact information. Keep your children's school emergency release card current.
- Preparation for children:** Teach your children what to do in an emergency, and make sure they know their own names and addresses, as well as the full names and contact information for parents and a second adult emergency contact.

Finally, review your emergency plan, and maintain an **emergency supply kit** at home, at work, at school, and in your car.

## What You Can Do During

Earthquakes happen without warning and terrorists count on surprise, fear, and confusion to add to the impact of their actions. The initial safety actions for earthquakes and terrorist attacks, such as bombings, are similar. Your first step when something happens is to pause and think. Look around you to see what is happening, and what immediate steps you can take to protect yourself and others.

- To protect yourself, **drop** down; **take cover** under something sturdy, and **hold on** to something with one hand while protecting your head and neck with the other.



- If there is smoke, get near the floor, cover your mouth and nose with a cloth, and move carefully toward the nearest marked exit.

- If it is necessary to evacuate, try to do so calmly. Use only marked exits and stairways. Never use elevators. Help others who are moving more slowly or who may be disoriented.

If you are not directly affected by the earthquake or the attack, try to stay calm, think before you act, encourage others, and comfort children. Turn on news radio or television, and listen for official instructions. Follow the directions of authorities.

## What You Can Do After

Try to stay calm. Think before you act. Don't let an earthquake or act of terrorism cause you unnecessary harm.

- Stay informed. Listen to official reports and instructions on the radio or television.
- If officials order an evacuation, cooperate quickly and follow their instructions regarding evacuation routes and shelter locations.
- If officials tell you to "Shelter in Place," they mean for you to stay inside your home, vehicle or workplace until it is safe to come out. They will provide you with detailed instructions.
- Do not leave your sheltered location or return to the evacuated area until officials confirm that it is safe to do so.
- Implement your family emergency plan, and notify your out-of-state contact of your location and status.
- Be aware of the psychological impact that terrorism can inflict, even when it happens to people you do not know personally.
- If an earthquake has occurred, go to the California Integrated Seismic Network at [www.cisn.org](http://www.cisn.org) to get information about the location/magnitude/shakemap of the earthquake.



This focus sheet is produced as part of the Emergency Survival Program (ESP). ESP is an awareness campaign designed to increase home, neighborhood, business and school emergency preparedness. ESP was developed by the County of Los Angeles. The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (OES) and representatives from Contra Costa, Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Marin, Mono, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Santa Cruz, and Ventura counties; Southern California Edison; the Southern California Earthquake Center and the American Red Cross assist in the development of campaign materials and coordination of the campaign.