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Click on image above for interactive step-by-step directions, where you can also play Play 'Beat the Quake' to test your earthquake knowledge and skill at [dropcoverholdon.org](#).

- **DROP** to the ground (before the earthquake drops you!),
- Take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy desk or table, and
- **HOLD ON** to it until the shaking stop

Thursday, 10.15 at 10:15: Get Ready to Shake Out!

Metro will participate in the Great California Shake Out

- [What to do:](#) The American Red Cross and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) offer advice on earthquake preparedness.
- Check it out at [www.shakeout.org](#)

(Oct. 13, 2008) The [Great California Shake Out](#) will go off this Thursday at 10:15 a.m. sharp. In an all-staff memo to employees, CEO Art Leahy directed that "employees who are able should perform a "drop, cover, and hold on" drill at that time at their desk."

The exercise is billed as the largest earthquake preparedness activity in U.S. history.

According to the Shake Out website, "millions of people in homes, schools, businesses, government offices, and public places all over California will 'Drop, Cover, and Hold On,' " the standard exercise for protecting oneself from falling objects released by a temblor.

Last year, 5.5 million Southern Californians participated in the drill. It has since expanded to the entire state and organizers are aiming for 10 million participants this year.

"It's very important for employees to participate because in a stressful situation, such as a seismic event, staff may begin to panic and forget something that hasn't been practiced," said Phyllis Meng, Facilities Maintenance Supervisor. "Practicing for emergency events will train the employees in what to do during and following the event."

One thing to do may involve staying put, experts agree. During an

earthquake, many people are injured by falling building pieces. Often the safest place to be is inside a high-rise, particularly near the core of the building.

As predictions of 'The Big One' increase awareness, the Great California Shake Out hopes to encourage California residents to cover and protect themselves at the first jolt of a quake, without waiting to learn if the earthquake is large. By the time of that realization, it might be too late to protect yourself.

Meng reminds Metro Headquarters employees to "Drop, Cover and Hold On" whenever they feel an earthquake. She also reminds employees to move away from windows, even though the building's windows hold safety glass designed to crumble rather than fragment.

"If you are in an elevator, sit down and hang on," she adds. "Sometimes that's all you can do."

And, following an earthquake at Metro Headquarters, Meng recommends a little patience.

Even though your area might seem unaffected, Building Services must inspect each floor and all the equipment throughout the building, including equipment on the roof. Elevators must be inspected before they can begin carrying passengers again. Those inspections take time.

-- from staff reports

Five things to remember when an earthquake strikes Metro

- Don't panic; do not run outside!
- If time allows, get under your desk or in another protected area, duck and cover.
- Wait for instruction from your floor warden or supervisor.
- Remember that earthquakes often come in groups.
- If you are instructed to evacuate, remain calm and proceed in an orderly fashion.

The [American Red Cross](#) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency ([FEMA](#)) offer advice on earthquake preparedness:

When an earthquake hits when you are home

Before

- Stock at least a three-day supply of food, water (one gallon per person per day) clothes (at least one complete change of clothing and footwear per person), first aid and medical supplies, eyeglasses, extra cash (including coins), sanitation supplies, bedding, tools, a portable radio with batteries and other items your family will require.
- Conduct earthquake drills (including ducking under furniture) every six months with your family.
- Identify the safest places in each room in your home so you know where to take cover during an earthquake. This would be away from shelves, glass windows and heavy objects that might fall.
- Identify each way to exit your home and keep each route clear.

- Decide where and when to unite should you be apart when an earthquake hits.
- Choose a person out of the area for family members to contact if they become separated.
- Locate shutoff valves for water, gas, and electricity. Train each family member how to turn off utilities before an earthquake.
- Make copies of vital records and make photos and/or video of your valuables. Keep these records in a safe deposit box or with a trusted relative/friend in another city or state.
- Know the policies of the school or daycare center your children attend.

During

- Remain calm.
- If you are inside; stay inside.
- Protect yourself by ducking under a heavy piece of furniture or in a hall near an interior wall while covering your head and neck.
- Do not stand in a doorway. The door may injure you during the shaking.
- Stay away from appliances, large glass panes, shelves holding objects, and large decorative masonry, brick or plaster such as fireplaces.
- Keep hallways clear. They are usually one of the safest places to be during an earthquake. Stay away from kitchens and garages, which tend to be the most dangerous places.
- If you smell gas, do not turn on an electric light.

After

- Check for injuries and give aid.
 - Only use the phone for serious injury or fires.
 - Check gas and water leaks, broken electrical wiring and sewage lines. If you have turned your gas off, do not attempt to turn it back on! To safely re-establish service, you must call the Gas Company.
 - Check the building for cracks and damage.
 - Check food and water supplies.
 - Turn on radio or television for instructions.
 - Keep the streets clear for emergency vehicles.
 - Be prepared for aftershocks.
 - Remain calm and help others. If evacuating, post a message inside your home telling family members where to find you.
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