

Centre Court

Centre Court
Homeowners' Association, Inc.
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**CENTRE COURT
HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATION
INFORMATION
HANDBOOK
2024**

Centre Court Homeowners Association Information Handbook

Updated November 2015

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Release Note: This publication is a quick summary only and is not intended to be all inclusive. It is believed to be accurate at the time of publication. The Centre Court Homeowners Association and the Centre Court Board of Directors assumes no responsibility for any damage that arises from any action that is based on information found in this publication.

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Centre Court Administration

Five Centre Court homeowners sit on the Board of Directors. They meet monthly at the Association offices to discuss issues such as the budget, the reserve schedule, maintenance problems, homeowner complaints and landscaping priorities. All Centre Court residents are welcome to attend meetings. Notices are posted on the mail kiosks several days in advance.

Board members are elected to two-year terms each (two are elected one year and three the next) at the Annual Meeting, held in April at the Association offices. Since a quorum is necessary to hold the meeting, homeowners are urged to attend or fill out a proxy, assigning their vote either to a Board member or to another homeowner who will be attending the meeting. At the Annual Meeting, the Board members present a general update of Association business and the status of Centre Court issues during the past year. All Centre Court homeowners are strongly urged to attend this informative meeting.

Security

We're very lucky to live in a community that is relatively crime-free. The most common crime at Harbor Bay isle is theft from open garage doors during warmer weather!

Although we don't have garages at Centre Court, it is still important to be observant of any suspicious characters in our neighborhood. The front **gate is somewhat of a deterrent**, but the gate will not keep out someone who is determined to enter. If you see a suspicious person or activity, call CHBI Security immediately at (510) 865-0417. **Try to give** a description of the person(s), including the type and color of clothing, as well as their location within the area. (Check out the enclosed map!)

If you leave town, CHBI Security will stop by your home to check on things while you're away. Just call to let them know the dates you'll be gone. **They won't collect newspapers** or mail, and they won't feed your cat, but neighbors are great to call on for favors!

House Numbers

There is no rhyme or reason to the numbering system of homes at Centre Court! There are basic blocks of numbers, such as the 100s, 200s, etc. but that's it.

Enclosed is a map of Centre Court with all numbered homes, garbage cubicles, mailbox kiosks, and utility sheds designated. Please use it when you call the Association offices to identify an area that has a problem.

You may often find visitors wandering around Centre Court, searching for a particular number! There are maps posted at two mailbox kiosks in Centre Court to help those lost souls. One map is posted at the front gate on one is posted at the mailbox kiosk toward the center of the complex across from the main greenbelt area.

Parking/Front Gate

Each unit at Centre Court has a minimum of one "RESERVED" carport parking space. Some units have an additional RESERVED space within the complex. You should never park in nor block access to someone else's RESERVED space. RESERVED spaces are deeded with each unit and will be listed on your property papers. Additional guest parking is available on the streets of Centre Court, Packet Landing, or Veterans Court (outside the back gate).

Please instruct your guests to park on the street. Parking in the driveways or in the turnaround areas of the carports is against the law, as those are designated emergency access zones. You or your guests will be issued a parking citation from the City of Alameda if your car is parked in these areas. Parking in guest parking is limited to 72 hours.

Every home has been given 1 genie that open the front gate. You must use this genie if you want to enter Centre Court; the gate will automatically open as you exit in your vehicle. Additional genies may be purchased from the Homeowners Association.

If guests call you from the front kiosk and you wish to let them in, dial "5" from your telephone to open the pedestrian gate and dial "9" to open the vehicle gate. Guests must call from the kiosk phone at the front gate; they cannot call from a cellular phone. To have your name added to the roster at the front kiosk, call the Association Offices at 865-3363.

Architectural and Landscape Committees

Two committees regulate architectural and landscape matters. The Community Architectural Committee (CAC) is a subdivision of the Community of Harbor Bay Isle Owners Association that oversees all architectural and landscape matters on Harbor Bay Isle. Our own Centre Court Architectural Committee is accountable to both the Centre Court Board and to the CAC. These committees oversee Exclusive Use Common Area to be sure they are maintained in clean condition and good repair, free of any debris or other fire hazards.

If a homeowner wishes to change landscaping, an application must be presented to Community Architectural Administrator (call (510) 865-3363). The application is forwarded to the CAC for final approval to be sure that all proposed plants and shrubs are appropriate for the area and will not be harmful to the environment or neighbors' yards and will not adversely affect drainage or building foundations.

Events on the Green (Common Area)

Required Form: Refer to the Policies handbook.

Required Documents: Minimum of 500 k Liability Insurance, Homeowners or renters Insurance.

Insurance

- **Provided by the Association**

Centre Court carries a "Condominium Association Policy" through Farmers insurance. The policy provides guaranteed replacement cost coverage for all exterior structures and common areas. It also includes, among other things, business liability coverage. There is a \$10,000 "basic" deductible. Each Homeowner's portion of the premium for this policy is included in the monthly Association dues.

The policy has certain exclusions. For example, it does not cover damage caused by normal wear and tear; insects, birds or rodents; water damage caused by floods or underground water; or settling, deterioration, contamination or nuclear hazard or earthquake.

Because this coverage may change annually, you should contact the Association office for up-to-date information concerning insurance coverage. Homeowners may be required to keep mortgagors informed of coverage on their Units. The Association Offices ((510) 865-3363) can supply a face page of the Condominium Association Policy to your mortgagor.

- **Provided by the Homeowner or Renter**

The Association does not provide coverage for your personal property interior of your unit or personal liability. A policy providing this coverage is usually called a "Unit Owners Policy" (HO6). A Unit Owner Policy usually covers you for personal property, loss of use, personal liability, and damage to the property of others, walls in of your unit.

You may also obtain a "Personal Articles Policy" for jewelry and other valuable items. If you wish to carry earthquake insurance, you should add an earthquake endorsement to your policy. You may also request a "**loss assessment**" endorsement to cover your share of certain assessments charged to all Unit Owners by the Association. If earthquake damage occurs to Units, the Association would assess all Unit Owners. If you have an earthquake loss assessment endorsement on your Unit Owners Policy, your policy would reimburse you for the deductible assessed against you (up to the policy limits).

For more information, you may contact your insurance agent or Farmers Insurance agent for Centre Court, Leah Nishi, at (510) 473-5565.

Garbage

There are gray bins located in each trash enclosure which are used for trash that cannot be recycled. See recycling below. Pick-up day is Monday, generally between 7:00-8:00 a.m.

It is everyone's responsibility to keep the trash enclosures neat and clean. Make sure your trash bin is kept closed at all times to avoid attracting animals.

Cardboard boxes will be picked up if they are broken down and in a closed bin. All bins are open to all residents.

Recycling

There are green recycling bins located in each trash enclosure and they are used for green waste materials (i.e., leaves, landscape and grass clippings, weeds, etc.)

There are blue bins located in each trash enclosure and are used for plastic (#1 and #2 only; narrow neck bottles and jugs); glass (any color, but no ceramic glass); steel, scrap metal (aluminum foil/pans; small kitchen appliances), metal cans, newspapers, mixed paper (junk mail, magazines, phone books, catalogs, cereal boxes, egg cartons, etc). Please refer to the chart posted in each trash enclosure for a more comprehensive list of recyclables. Please rinse out cans, jars, and bottles. There is no need to remove the labels, but do remove tops, caps, corks, etc. **DO NOT PUT PLASTIC BAGS** in this bin; take your plastic bags back to the grocery store for recycling. For more information on recycling go to the ACI website alamedacountyindustries.com

To obtain a special container for the disposal of motor oil, please call Alameda Recycling at (510) 483-1400. There is no additional fee for this service.

General Maintenance

Please be alert to any general maintenance problems at Centre Court! If you see a light bulb that needs replacing, a broken latch, a utility door blown down, or any other damage to the property, **REPORT IT** by calling the Association offices at 865-3363. With your help we can fix a small problem before it becomes costlier.

If you see someone causing damage to the Common Areas, please report it! *Remember: it's your dues that pay for maintaining the common areas.* If someone is defacing the property ...or if a truck damages a carport... or if children are found "riding" the front gate... ALL of us will have to pay for the repairs through our association dues. It only makes good sense to protect your investment!

Because home maintenance in a condominium is different than in a single-family home, there is often confusion as to *who is* responsible for *what* in regard to building maintenance. At Centre Court, part of your building is owned by you (your Unit) and part of your building is owned by the Association (the Building Common Area). The Architectural and Landscape Guidelines in this booklet details the areas of building maintenance responsibility and provides suggested preventive maintenance for your unit. It also explains the procedures to follow in the event there is damage to the Building Common Area that is adjacent to your Unit. Please read it carefully!

Turning off the Gas & Electric Lines

On the enclosed map of Centre Court is the location of all utility sheds. Each shed houses the Bureau of Alameda electric meters and the PG&E gas lines for a cluster of about six Units. In the event of a disaster, electric lines will need to be checked and possibly turned off. **PLEASE TAKE THE LEAD IN DOING THIS!** Do not count on your neighbor -- all of us will have to work together to be sure that our homes are protected from further damage.

To determine if the electricity should be turned off, look at your meter in the shed. If the wheel is spiraling freely, shut off the electricity.

If the smell of gas is detected, call PG&E. All main gas lines to units in Centre Court have an automatic gas shut off valve installed. **ONCE THE GAS HAS BEEN TURNED OFF, ONLY A PG&E REPRESENTATIVE CAN TURN IT BACK ON.**

Pets

We love pets at Centre Court, as long as they have been socialized to the conditions of condominium living! We've found that pets are usually problem-free when their owners are considerate and cooperative in the following regards:

- Elimination of a pet's bodily wastes must take place on the resident's premises. The Common Areas are not to be used for this purpose under any circumstances as it creates problems for our landscape crews, destroys our lawns and other planting materials and is a health issue and nuisance for residents. If your pet, or any visiting pet, has an accident in this regard, it is your responsibility to clean up after it. Male dogs should be prevented from "marking" shrubs and other plant materials. We have had to replace many plants (which is an expense to all homeowners) because they have been killed in this fashion.
- While in the Common Areas, all pets must be on leash. The City of Alameda has a very strict leash law and has cited many pet owners for violations. This rule applies to cats as well as we have had problems with territorial fights, using neighboring yards as a litter box, and generally bothering neighbors.
- As a final pet issue, residents are happiest when they are not bothered by constantly barking dogs. This is an annoying problem that should not have to be tolerated in our close quarters.

Please remember that appropriate pet behavior is your responsibility. All pet problems can be reported to the Association Manager at (510) 865-3363.

Home Sweet Home Improvement

Whether you're planning a kitchen renovation or simply getting new windows, finding a competent and reliable contractor is the first step to a successful and satisfying home improvement project. Remember, you live in a condominium where the Homeowner's Association owns the perimeter walls, roof, etc. Many remodeling plans will need to be approved by the Architectural Committee. Applications may be obtained from the Community Offices or from the community website www.harborbay.org. Make this one of your first steps!

Your home may be your most valuable financial asset. That's why it's important to be cautious when you hire someone to work on it. Home improvement and repair and maintenance contractors often advertise in newspapers, the Yellow Pages, and on the radio and TV. However, don't consider an ad an indication of the quality of a contractor's work. Your best bet is a reality check from those in the know: friends, neighbors, or co-workers who have had improvement work done. Get written estimates from several firms. Ask for explanations for price variations. Don't automatically choose the lowest bidder.

Home Improvement Professionals

Depending on the size and complexity of your project, you may choose to work with a number of different professionals:

General Contractors manage all aspects of your project, including hiring and supervising subcontractors, getting building permits, and scheduling inspections. They also work with architects and designers.

Specialty Contractors install particular products, such as cabinets and bathroom fixtures. Architects design homes, additions, and major renovations. If your project includes structural changes, you may want to hire an architect who specializes in home remodeling.

Designers have expertise in specific areas of the home, such as kitchens and baths. Design/Build Contractors provide one-stop service. They see your project through from start to finish. Some firms have architects on staff; others use certified designers.

Don't Get Nailed

Not all contractors operate within the law. Here are some tip-offs to potential rip-offs. A less than reputable contractor:

- solicits door-to-door;
- offers you discounts for finding other customers;
- just happens to have materials left over from a previous job;
- only accepts cash payments;
- asks you to get the required building permits;
- does not list a business number in the local telephone directory;
- tells you your job will be a "demonstration;"
- pressures you for an immediate decision;
- offers exceptionally long guarantees;
- asks you to pay for the entire job up-front;
- suggests that you borrow money from a lender the contractor knows. If you're not careful, you could lose your home through a home improvement loan scam.

Hiring a Contractor

- Interview each contractor you're considering. Here are some questions to ask.
- How long have you been in business? Look for a well-established company and check it out with consumer protection officials. They can tell you if there are unresolved consumer complaints on file. One caveat: No record of complaints against a particular contractor doesn't necessarily mean no previous consumer problems. It may be that problems exist, but have not yet been reported, or that the contractor is doing business under several different names.
- Are you licensed and registered with the state? While most states license electrical and plumbing contractors, only 36 states have some type of licensing and registration statutes affecting contractors, remodelers, and/or specialty contractors. The licensing can range from simple registration to a detailed qualification process. Also, the licensing requirements in one locality may be different from the requirements in the rest of the state. Check with your local building department or consumer protection agency to find out about licensing requirements in your area. If your state has licensing laws, ask to see the contractor's license. Make sure it's current and that it belongs to the contractor you are working with. California requires contractors to have a current license, check the website at www.cslb.ca.gov and click on "check a licensed contractor".
- How many projects like mine have you completed in the last year? Ask for a list. This will help you determine how familiar the contractor is with your type of project.
- Will my project require a permit? Most states and localities require permits for building projects, even for simple jobs like decks. A competent contractor will get all the necessary permits before starting work on your project. Be suspicious if the contractor asks you to get the permit(s). It could mean that the contractor is not licensed or registered, as required by your state or locality.
- May I have a list of references? The contractor should be able to give you the names, addresses, and phone numbers of at least three clients who have projects similar to yours. Ask each how long ago the project was completed and if you can see it. Also, tell the contractor that you'd like to visit jobs in progress.
- Will you be using subcontractors on this project? If yes, ask to meet them, and make sure they have current insurance coverage and licenses, if required. Also ask them if they were paid on time by this contractor. A "mechanic's lien" could be placed on your home if your contractor fails to pay the subcontractors and suppliers on your project. That means the subcontractors and suppliers could go to court to force you to sell your home to satisfy their unpaid bills from your project. Protect yourself by asking the contractor, and every subcontractor and supplier, for a lien release or lien waiver.
- What types of insurance do you carry? Contractors should have personal liability, worker's compensation, and property damage coverage. Ask for copies of insurance certificates, and make sure they're current. Avoid doing business with contractors who don't carry the appropriate insurance. Otherwise, you'll be held liable for any injuries and damages that occur during the project.

Checking References

- Talk with some of the remodeler's former customers. They can help you decide if a particular contractor is right for you. You may want to ask:
- Can I visit your home to see the completed job?
- Were you satisfied with the project? Was it completed on time?
- Did the contractor keep you informed about the status of the project, and any problems along the way?
- Were there unexpected costs? If so, what were they?
- Did workers show up on time? Did they clean up after finishing the job?
- Would you recommend the contractor?
- Would you use the contractor again?

Understanding Your Payment Options

You have several payment options for most home improvement and maintenance and repair projects. For example, you can get your own loan or ask the contractor to arrange financing for larger projects. For smaller projects, you may want to pay by check or credit card. Avoid paying cash. Whatever option you choose, be sure you have a reasonable payment schedule and a fair interest rate. Here are some additional tips:

Try to limit your down payment. Some state laws limit the amount of money a contractor can request as a down payment. Contact your state or local consumer agency to find out what the law is in your area.

Try to make payments during the project contingent upon completion of a defined amount of work. This way, if the work is not proceeding according to schedule, the payments also are delayed.

Don't make the final payment or sign an affidavit of final release until you are satisfied with the work and know that the subcontractors and suppliers have been paid and city inspections have been completed. Lien laws in your state may allow subcontractors and/or suppliers to file a mechanic's lien against your home to satisfy their unpaid bills. Contact your local consumer agency for an explanation of lien laws where you live.

- Some state or local laws limit the amount by which the final bill can exceed the estimate, unless you have approved the increase. Check with your local consumer agency.
- If you have a problem with merchandise or services that you charged to a credit card, and you have made a good faith effort to work out the problem with the seller, you have the right to withhold from the card issuer payment for the merchandise or services. You can withhold payment up to the amount of credit outstanding for the purchase, plus any finance or related charges.

The "Home Improvement" Loan Scam

A contractor calls or knocks on your door and offers to install a new roof or remodel your kitchen at a price that sounds reasonable. You tell him you're interested, but can't afford it. He tells you it's no problem — he can arrange financing through a lender he knows.

You agree to the project, and the contractor begins work. At some point after the contractor begins, you are asked to sign a lot of papers. The papers may be blank or the lender may rush you to sign before you have time to read what you've been given to sign.

You sign the papers. Later, you realize that the papers you signed are a home equity loan. The interest rate, points and fees seem very high. To make matters worse, the work on your home isn't done right or hasn't been completed, and the contractor, who may have been paid by the lender, has little interest in completing the work to your satisfaction.

You can protect yourself from inappropriate lending practices. Here's how.

Don't:

- Agree to a home equity loan if you don't have enough money to make the monthly payments.
- Sign any document you haven't read or any document that has blank spaces to be filled in after you sign.
- Let anyone pressure you into signing any document.
- Deed your property to anyone. First consult an attorney, a knowledgeable family member, or someone else you trust.
- Agree to financing through your contractor without shopping around and comparing loan terms.

Getting a Written Contract

Contract requirements vary by state. Even if your state does not require a written agreement, ask for one. A contract spells out the who, what, where, when and cost of your project. The agreement should be clear, concise and complete. Before you sign a contract, make sure it contains:

- The contractor's name, address, phone, and license number, if required.
- The payment schedule for the contractor, subcontractors and suppliers.
- An estimated start and completion date.
- The contractor's obligation to obtain all necessary permits.
- How change orders will be handled. A change order — common on most remodeling jobs — is a written authorization to the contractor to make a change or addition to the work described in the original contract. It could affect the project's cost and schedule. Remodelers often require payment for change orders before work begins.
- A detailed list of all materials including color, model, size, brand name, and product.
- Warranties covering materials and workmanship. The names and addresses of the parties honoring the warranties — contractor, distributor or manufacturer — must be identified. The length of the warranty period and any limitations also should be spelled out.
- What the contractor will and will not do. For example, is site clean-up and trash hauling included in the price? Ask for a "broom clause." It makes the contractor responsible for all clean-up work, including spills and stains.
- Oral promises also should be added to the written contract.
- A written statement of your right to cancel the contract within three business days if you signed it in your home or at a location other than the seller's permanent place of business. During the sales transaction, the salesperson (contractor) must give you two copies of a cancellation form (one to keep and one to send back to the company) and a copy of your contract or receipt. The contract or receipt must be dated, show the name and address of the seller, and explain your right to cancel.

Keeping Records

Keep all paperwork related to your project in one place. This includes copies of the contract, change orders and correspondence with your home improvement professionals. Keep a log or journal of all phone calls, conversations and activities. You also might want to take photographs as the job progresses. These records are especially important if you have problems with your project — during or after construction.

Completing the Job: A Checklist

Before you sign off and make the final payment, use this checklist to make sure the job is complete. Check that:

- All work meets the standards spelled out in the contract.
- You have written warranties for materials and workmanship.
- You have proof that all subcontractors and suppliers have been paid.
- The job site has been cleaned up and cleared of excess materials, tools and equipment.
- You have inspected and approved the completed work.

Where to Complain

If you have a problem with your home improvement project, first try to resolve it with the contractor. Many disputes can be resolved at this level. Follow any phone conversations with a letter sent by certified mail. Request a return receipt. That's your proof that the company received your letter. Keep a copy for your files.

If you can't get satisfaction, consider contacting the following organizations for further information and help:

- State and local consumer protection offices.
- Your state or local Builders Association and/or Remodelers Council.
- Your local Better Business Bureau.
- Action line and consumer reporters. Check with your local newspaper, TV, and radio stations for contacts.
- Local dispute resolution programs.

Earthquake Preparedness Handbook



Preparing for the Big One

This is a no-nonsense guide for families and individuals. It will advise you on how to prepare for, survive and recover from those rare, but increasingly likely, major West Coast earthquakes.

We live along the Pacific Rim's infamous "Ring of Fire." This constantly active seismic area is capable of producing truly devastating quakes.

This guide will provide you with detailed information applicable to our neighborhood. Based on this information, you'll be able to tailor your own family plan.

In a truly major earthquake, much of what we take for granted may be disabled or destroyed, including roads, bridges, buildings and essential services. In fact, critical emergency services such as police, fire and medical may be disrupted or overwhelmed. So, for thousands of people, self-reliance will be the order of the days and weeks following a major event.

YOU NEED TO HAVE AN EARTHQUAKE PLAN

A personal or family earthquake plan can not only save your life, it can save you untold amounts of fear and worry.

Some people think that such plans are childish or somehow do not apply to them. They think that their home or neighborhood will not be among those that are destroyed.

But when news departments cover the effects of truly large quakes, one thing becomes obvious: earthquakes do their damage in a highly random and unpredictable manner.

No neighborhood, no matter how wealthy or poor, is immune from the effects of a large or great earthquake.

Your Personal Survival

An earthquake plan gives you the opportunity to anticipate the worst, prepare for it and recover with a minimum of effort.

An earthquake plan, if properly executed, will make the aftermath much less scary because you'll know you have a plan in place to deal with the loss of services we all take for granted. That will give you a sense of confidence and well-being more than worth the effort you have to put into creating such a plan.

You don't have to do all of this at one time. But, you should have your entire plan in place (including your cache of emergency supplies) within a couple of weeks of commencing your plan.

You need to involve your family in the process so that every one understands his or her duties and responsibilities.

If possible, you should discuss such a plan with your neighbors. You might be able to share expenses for certain things that would likely be an unaffordable luxury for any single family. For example: a generator.

There's also safety in numbers when neighborhoods gather together to observe and report the presence of strangers who might come into the area when police are involved in more pressing matters.

So, use this proactive, interactive guide for your safety, your family's safety and that of your neighborhood. The next quake is coming. That is an undisputed fact.

The most important thing: survive the quake. MEMORIZE this drill so that it becomes second nature. Make sure that you and your family PRACTICE it regularly.

- **DROP BELOW THE LEVEL OF THE FURNITURE AROUND YOU**
This will afford you some protection from falling debris. Determine such "safe" locations now--before a quake. If possible, get under a table or desk for additional protection. Stay away from windows, bookshelves, filing cabinets and other things that can topple on you. If you're outside: get away from power lines, trees and buildings. Look up for, and avoid falling objects.
- **COVER YOUR HEAD AND NECK WITH YOUR HANDS**
Don't uncover until the shaking stops.
- **HOLD YOUR POSITION**
Grab on to something to steady yourself until the shaking stops. If you're in a doorway, stay there. Don't get up and don't run.

County Disaster Agency

Each county has its own Office of Emergency Services (OES) with its own earthquake and disaster plan, tailored to its own unique needs. As conditions change, so do those plans. An excellent place to start making your own earthquake plan is knowing your county's plan.

Alameda County 4985 Broder Blvd. (510) 803-7800
Dublin, CA 94568

City Disaster Agency

Many cities have their own Office of Emergency Services that make and carry out earthquake and disaster plans. Your city may be one of these.

They often provide information, training and assistance before a quake strikes.

Once a major quake strikes, these agencies have the primary responsibility of coordinating emergency efforts. At that time, they will be extremely busy dealing with the disaster itself and should not be called.

Now is the time to get in touch with them to see what information and assistance they have available.

Alameda 2550 Central Ave. #290 (510) 748-4595
Alameda, CA 94501

Local Red Cross Chapter

The Red Cross is one of the key relief agencies whenever an earthquake hits. Local chapters of the Red Cross have all kinds of information available either free or for a very nominal fee. The Red Cross also offers a variety of courses on a critically important topic: first aid.

You may also ask for these booklets:

- Are You Ready for An Earthquake?
- Your Family Disaster Plan
- Your Family Disaster Supplies Kit

Red Cross - Alameda (510) 595-4400 (24 Hours)

Special Considerations

- **OUTSIDE:**
Stand well away from power lines and other suspended objects. Move away from trees or walls.
- **OUTSIDE NEAR TALL BUILDINGS:**
The major danger here is falling debris. If you're close to a doorway, stand inside the building's doorway. It's a bad idea to run into the street because much of the debris will fall there.
- **IN A CAR:**
Pull over. Park away from electrical lines, trees, tall buildings, utility poles, etc. Stay with your car because it provides an excellent shelter. Don't leave your car or move it until you completely understand the environment surrounding your car. Your radio will be an important source of information.
- **IN A HIGH RISE BUILDING:**
You're likely to experience more severe shaking than at ground level as the building sways. Get under a table, desk or in a doorway. Hook your arm around the furniture to prevent it from shaking away from you. Stay away from windows. Stay on the floor you're on. Do not use the elevator because chances are, the power will fail. If it does, you'll be trapped in the elevator.
- **IN A CROWDED AREA:**
Do not rush to door. In a stampede, you're more likely to be hurt in the crush of the crowd than by the shaking of the quake. Wait until things settle down before you head for the door.
- **IN A THEATER OR STADIUM:**
Don't rush the aisles or exits. In a stampede, you're more likely to be hurt in the crush of the crowd than by the shaking of the quake. Wait until things settle down before you head for the door.
- **IN A WHEEL CHAIR:**
STAY IN IT. If the shaking is moderate and you're near a doorway, get in it. If the shaking is violent, lock your wheels and cover your head and neck with your arms.
- **IN EVERY CASE:**
Look up! Be aware of your surroundings and what might fall on you.

Understanding Your Surroundings

Take the time to take a close look at each room in your home, office, workplace or other places you often go to.

Why? Odds are, you'll most likely been in such a place when the quake hits.

What to do? First, LOOK UP. Most people killed or injured in earthquakes are hit by falling objects.

So, ask yourself, "What is likely to fall or topple over if major shaking begins and who might get hurt if something does fall?"

These are not unreasonable or burdensome adjustments when you consider the consequences if a major quake hits.

So, go from room to room, assess the likely dangers and adjust things accordingly. Many things can be firmly anchored so they'll not fall. Other things should simply be moved to put you and your family out of harm's way. Make a check list in each room of the things that need to be corrected and make the corrections as soon as you can.

Rules of thumb:

1. objects twice as tall as their width (e.g., filing cabinets) tend to topple.
2. heavy objects on shelves should be lowered below the height of your youngest child.

EXAMPLES:

- a. Heavy artwork, lighting fixtures or statuary above the headboards of beds can be extremely dangerous. If a quake hits while you're sleeping, those falling objects could injure or kill you or your family. Move them to a safer area or securely mount them to avoid this serious danger.
- b. Great seats in a theater may also sit directly below a large chandelier that might fall in a major quake. Move over a few seats to avoid being directly under such things.
- c. At work, if your work space is close to boxes stacked high on shelves or the floor, ask your facilities manager to either relocate you or the boxes to avoid being under them if they topple.

Situational Awareness Can Save Your Life

The Federal Emergency Management Agency says the concept of "situational awareness" (being aware of your surroundings) can be a life saver. You can control some of them, others you cannot, but always be aware of them.

Uncontrollable: total partial building collapse and fires from broken utility lines.

Avoidable: fallen power lines and flying glass.

Controllable: falling fixtures and furnishings (most common injury source).

FIRE AND EXPLOSION DANGERS

In a truly major quake, chances are high that gas lines in or around your home or workplace may break. The possible consequence is a fire or explosion. Therefore, it's critical that you and your family know how to shut off your gas and electric supplies.

Even if you get through the initial quake, there's still serious danger if the integrity of utility lines has been compromised. (Note: even broken water lines can undermine the structural integrity of your dwelling.)

The good news is, your gas, electric and water companies will be happy to provide information on how to do it and when to do it. (Note: if your utility lines have not been damaged, many

utilities suggest not turning them off since it may be days or weeks before they can get to your house to turn them back on.)

Make sure you have and know how to use tools needed to shut off utilities (gas and water.)

Make sure that any large appliances (water heaters, space heaters, coal or wood fired stoves and any other heat generating appliances) are properly bolted, strapped or anchored. Should they topple or break, they could also easily cause a fire or explosion.

First Aid Kits

In a major quake, hospitals are likely to be overwhelmed with seriously injured people. 911 will be overwhelmed too. Large-scale emergencies will keep rescue squads occupied.

So, you should be prepared to take care of a wide variety of injuries yourself. Such injuries can include everything from minor cuts to major traumas such as severed limbs.

If possible, you should take a basic First Aid course.

Having and knowing how to use an adequate first aid kit (at the very least, enough for you and your family) is essential:

- First Aid Instruction booklet
- Adhesive tape (2" wide roll)
- Antiseptic solution (alcohol or equivalent)
- Sterile cotton tipped applicators
- Aspirin or other pain relievers
- Roll bandages
- Baking soda
- 2" wide bandages
- Cold medications
- 4" wide bandages
- Diarrhea medications
- Adhesive strips (assorted)
- Laxative
- Triangular bandages (37" & 52" for slings)
- Ear drops
- Sterile cotton swabs
- Eye drops
- Sterile dressings (4" by 4")
- Toothache remedies
- Scissors
- Table salt
- Safety pins (assorted)
- Skin/sun creams
- Sanitary napkins or tampons
- Motion sickness tablets for nausea
- Wooden splints (18" long)
- Petroleum jelly
- Tweezers
- Smelling salts
- Thermometers

SPECIAL NEEDS

- Prescription medicines - if your home supply is lost, this will hold you over if pharmacies are destroyed.
- Prescription glasses - your glasses could be destroyed so have an extra pair in your quake kit
- Prescription contact lenses and solution - same as glasses but don't forget solutions

Emergency Supplies

You should also store the following emergency supplies in an accessible location in, or near your home. Think carefully about where to keep these supplies. In case of a house collapse, would you be able to retrieve these supplies?

- Simple tool kit (to turn off utilities)
- Fire extinguisher (one of these in each of these locations): kitchen, by water heater, by furnace, in garage)
- Smoke detectors (one per bedroom)
- AM/FM radio or battery operated TV
- Flashlights (also consider buying battery-operated fluorescent lamps)
- Extra long-life alkaline batteries (have a large supply on hand)
- Whistle or loud horn (to signal for help)
- Shovel and crowbar
- Matches or butane lighters (waterproof matches are best - keep ample supplies on hand)
- Ladder (portable model for single floor homes / rope model for upper floor residences)
- Tents or portable shelters to protect from wind and rain
- Bedding (one sleeping bag, cot or inflatable mattress per person, plus blankets and pillows)
- Extra clothing
- Sanitation supplies such as buckets, plastic liner bags, disinfectants, deodorizers, toilet tissue, wash pan, soap, disposable towels (essential to maintain health)
- Map of local area (to assist rescue squads)
- Stove or charcoal grill (if charcoal-fired, use only outdoors to avoid asphyxiation)
- Adequate supply of fuel for stove
- Personal utensils (disposable flatware and napkins)
- Cooking utensils (easily cleaned pots, pans and cooking utensils)
- Extra dry or canned pet food
- Toys for pets and games for children
- Mirror for daylight signaling
- Water purification tablets
- Cellular phone

Emergency Food Supplies

After a major quake, people tend to clean out the grocery stores, which creates an artificial food shortage that could last several days. Therefore, you should have enough food on hand for each person for three to five days. Much of this food you'll find in your grocery store. Some will be found in camping, sporting goods, outdoor and survival stores.

Your food should:

- have a very long shelf life
- need no refrigeration
- use little or no water in its preparation
- be edible without heating if necessary
- be preparable in single person servings
- be rotated back into your home food supply before it expires

Here's a suggested list of the kinds of food you should have on hand:

- **WATER**
This is critical. You should have a supply of at least 10 to 30 gallons per person. It should be stored in plastic bottles than can survive earthquake shaking. If you have any questions about purity, water purification tablets or 6 drops of bleach per gallon is a good purification agent.
- **BEVERAGES**
Sodas, canned milk, powdered drink mixes, fruit and vegetable juices.
- **PREPARED FOODS**
Beef stews, raviolis, soups. (make sure you have a manual can opener)
- **CANNED MEATS**
Hams, chicken, fish. (don't forget a manual can opener)
- **CANNED FRUITS**
Pineapple, apple sauce, prunes. (remember - manual can opener)
- **CANNED VEGETABLES**
Corn, peas, tomatoes,
- **DRY OR DEHYDRATED FOODS**
Ramen soups, beef jerky, cereals, room temperature cheeses.
- **DRY OR DEHYDRATED FRUITS**
Apples, trail mix.
- **CANNED OR JARRED STAPLES**
Peanut butter, jellies, jams, crackers, wafers.
- **READY-TO-EAT MEALS**
"MRE's" (formerly K-rations) available at camping and outdoor stores.
- **VITAMIN AND MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS**
- **INFANT FOODS**
- **SPECIAL DIETETIC FOODS**
If you or a family member has special dietary considerations, you need to plan for that before a quake hits. Make sure you have an adequate supply of such special foods on hands.
- **PET FOODS**
Don't forget your pets. Pet food (canned and dry) is easily stored for long periods of time.

Never raid this supply.

Keep in sealed containers.

Rotate it out before it expires.

Replace with fresh supplies.

Make A Home Inventory

The most important element of recovering from an earthquake (or other disaster) is knowing what you've lost and how to replace it.

So, before a quake hits, take the time to create a complete inventory of your most important property. Once you make this list, put it in a safe deposit box or some other location where it won't be lost with your property.

As you'll soon find out, there's plenty of stuff in your house. But just imagine how tough it would be to try to remember it from memory. Fact is, you'd forget most of it. This list, however will help you recover more quickly.

Photo and Video Inventories

The “short cut” method of taking an inventory is to use either a still camera or a video camera. A stack of pictures or a tape will make it very easy for you to recall many things you’d never remember if you had to go from pure memory.

When you take you pictures, here’s what you need to remember:

- Take several overall “wide shots” of each room so that you can create a panoramic view of what the entire room looked like.
- Photograph each piece of valuable furniture including everything from tables to chairs, ceiling lamps to rugs, window dressings to art.
- Open every drawer, cabinet, closet and storage area and photograph their contents.
- Specifically photograph (several shots) anything that is a collectible such as a stamp collection coin set, etc.
- Specifically photograph (several shots) any jewelry (rings, watches, etc.)
- Specifically photograph the serial number of each and every device (computer, TV, VCR, etc.) that has a serial number. (If it’s too small to photograph, write the number down in large letters and then photograph that.)

Yes, this can be a tedious, boring and time consuming job.

Remember: Never keep your inventory list, tape or pictures in the same place you have inventories. Put them in another place, preferably a safe deposit box or with a friend or relative out of the area.

Children and Pets

Child psychologists say that children react differently to earthquakes than adults. Parents must help their children deal with the fears and anxieties or risk long term psychological damage to them.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has excellent resources for helping parents and teacher cope with children’s reactions to earthquakes and other disasters. To obtain your free brochures, write:

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) P.O. Box 29998
Building 105

Presidio of San Francisco, CA 94129-1250 (800) 480-2520

Internet - <http://www.fema.gov/kids/teaciller.html>

PETS

Earthquakes can be highly disorienting to pets. They can be terrified if their territory (your home) is heavily damaged.

Pets frequently run away when a major quake hits. Therefore, even indoor pets should have identification tags (or ID chips placed under the skin) to aid in their recovery.

If they are still around, you need to reassure the pet with lots of close contact. If the pet has a favorite type of toy, buy another one and put it in with your other earthquake supplies.

The SPCA, Red Cross, Humane Society or local animal control department will set up emergency pet centers near mass care facilities. Usually, the only animals allowed inside human care facilities will be seeing-eye dogs.

Call your local Animal Shelter, SPCA or Humane Society for generic pet care information as well as any specific plans they may already have to deal with pets in a disaster. Knowing this information now will be of great comfort in the event of a major quake.

