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# EARTHQUAKE

**Did you know that the Charleston, SC Area had the worst earthquake ever to hit the Eastern United States? Our area also experiences an average of 10 earthquakes per year, with generally one or more of these earthquakes exceeding a 2.0 on the Richter Scale. All Charleston area residents and businesses need to prepare for an earthquake to minimize loss and disruption.**

*Are you and your family prepared in the event of an earthquake in Charleston? Do you know how to protect yourself before, during and after an earthquake?*

## **Before An Earthquake occurs:**

- Replace heavy hanging over bed with light weight alternatives to reduce injuries.
- Keep heavy, unstable objects away from exit routes and anchor wheels of movable carts, cribs, etc. to reduce moving objects.
- Secure latches on cupboards to prevent doors from swinging open, which could allow contents to spill out during an earthquake.

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- Use flexible connectors where gas lines meet appliances to reduce gas leaks.
  - Keep a fire extinguisher in an accessible place.
  - Stabilize your water heater with metal straps to wall studs to reduce overturning.
  - Secure top heavy furniture to wall studs with metal braces to minimize falling objects.
  - Keep breakable in a low secure cabinet.
  - Anchor hanging lamps with closed hooks.
  - Keep emergency supplies on hand including drinking water, canned or dried foods, a flashlight, a portable radio, extra batteries, a manual can opener, and an adjustable wrench to cut off gas if necessary.
  - Purchase earthquake insurance.

## **During an Earthquake:**

- If indoors, stay indoors. If outdoors, stay outdoors.
- Crawl under a sturdy table if available.
- Move away from windows that may shatter.
- Move away from brick fireplaces where the chimney may fall.
- Stand in a doorway if no door is attached.

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## **After an Earthquake:**

- Be prepared for aftershocks.
- Check on family members or co-workers in your area.
- Listen to the radio for emergency instructions.
- Do not attempt to drive a vehicle unless it is absolutely necessary.
- Check your building for cracks and damage, including the roof, chimneys, and foundation.
- Check for gas and water leaks, damaged electrical wiring or sewer lines. If there is damage, turn off the utility at the source if possible.
- If you evacuate, leave a message at a predetermined place for your family members telling them where you may be found.
- Verify that any contractors selected to perform repairs to your home or business are properly licensed and obtain construction permits for the work they are doing to your property.

*For additional information contact the Charleston County, SC Area Project Impact Office at (843) 202-6940. This brochure prepared with the assistance of the Charleston Southern University Earthquake Education Center.*





Photo: Tent City after Charleston Earthquake of 1886.

### Can You Go It Alone For Three Days?

The first 72 hours after an earthquake are critical. Basic utilities such as electricity, water, gas, and/or telephone may not be working. Public Services will be attending to emergency situations and may not be able to provide customary service. You may need to go to a tent city or other public shelter if your home is damaged and unsafe for occupancy. You need to be prepared:

**Food:** Have sufficient quantity for at least 72 hours, preferably one week.

**Water:** Have enough for each person to have a gallon a day for at least 72 hours, preferably one week.

**Extra blankets, clothing, shoes and money.**

**Alternative Cooking Sources:** Have a barbecue grill or camp stove for outdoor cooking. CAUTION: Make certain there are no gas leaks before using fire as a cooking source and do not use charcoal indoors.

**Special Items:** Have at least a week's supply of medications and food for infants and those with special needs. Remember pet food.

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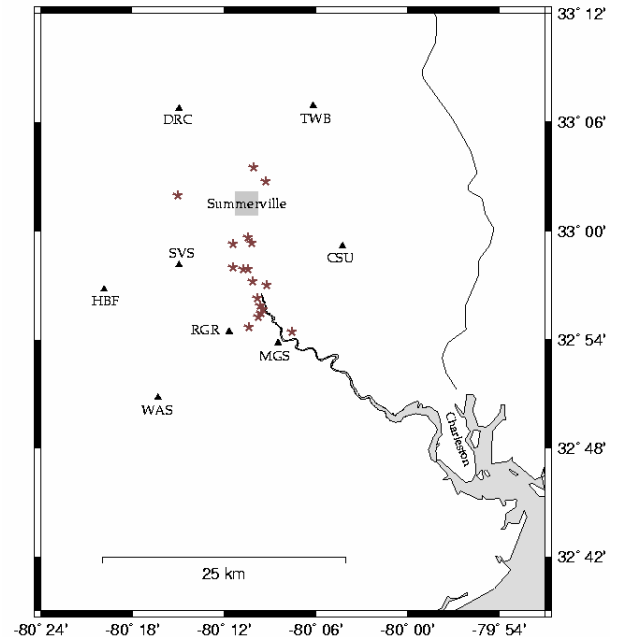
# EARTHQUAKE



### Are You Ready?

Photo: Charleston Earthquake of 1886

All MPSSZ events 01Jan - 24Jul 2001



▲ Earthquakes in Charleston, SC January - June, 2001  
 □ Earthquake monitoring stations