## EARTHQUAKE PREPAREDNESS IS FOR EVERYONE



As every adult knows, California is the highest earthquake risk area in the contiguous United States. Several large, well-known active faults run through the state-San Andreas, Hayward, and Newport-Inglewood, for example. They have been the cause of destructive earthquakes in the past and will be the source of future destructive shocks. Recent earthquakes have emphasized that there are also many faults about which experts know little or nothing, which can produce destructive shocks.

Since the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake (8.3 on the Richter Scale), California has not had a major destructive quake with a magnitude greater than 8.0. Such earthquakes can therefore be characterized as low-probability, high-loss events. However, damaging earthquakes with magnitudes greater than 6.5 occur in California on the average of every four years.

Today we have a good understanding of earthquakes, their effects, and their damage potential. We are still unable to predict when the next earthquake will occur. Earthquake effects on homes and buildings, however, are predictable. In recent earthquakes, the same kinds of damage that affected homes in 1906 occurred. This damage can be prevented.

Like buckling your seat belt, you have a choice. You can live and work in earthquake country and have peace of mind. If you take a few precautions, you can be quite safe. Please take the time to prepare.

Develop a plan for your family to use during an earthquake. Discuss it fully and conduct a drill. Draw a floor plan of your house and locate the following:

- Safest places in the house
- Most dangerous places
- Exits and alternative exits
- Utility shutoff valves
- Flashlights and batteries

- First-aid kit
- Fire extinguishers
- Food and water supplies
- Batteries and transistor radio

## You should also:

- Make special provisions for elderly or disabled family members.
- Make evacuation plans for your children's school or day-care.
- Identify resources in your neighborhood. Find someone in your neighborhood to watch out for your house.
- Identify a person outside the immediate area to coordinate family contact. While local phone lines may be down, longdistance lines will function sooner.
- Make special provisions for pets. Pets may not be allowed in shelters and may need to be confined in a safe room in your house.

Listed below are agencies that offer timely information that will help you to prepare.

- □ American Red Cross
- California Office of Emergency
  Services (OES)
- □ California Seismic Safety Commission
- ☐ City of Los Angeles Fire Department
- ☐ County of Los Angeles Fire Department
- ☐ <u>Federal Emergency Management</u> Agency
- □ <u>USGS</u>