



Earthquake Preparedness

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) reported that a 1.5 magnitude earthquake struck Clintonville, Wisconsin on March 20, 2012. The quake occurred shortly after midnight. Officials with USGS say that loud booming noises have been known to accompany earthquakes and it is possible that the strange sounds residents have been reporting for several days before is related to the earthquake.

Earthquakes happen in Wisconsin. On May 6, 1947 a tremor centered south of Milwaukee caused minor damage including broken windows and dishes falling off shelves. Distant quakes are also felt here. The 5.8 magnitude quake in Virginia which damaged the Washington Monument, the National Cathedral and other buildings in Washington D.C. was felt in southeast Wisconsin.

Although Wisconsin has never suffered a major earthquake many residents are wondering how to prepare for a quake and what to do if the earth does move.

Before:

- Have an emergency kit in your home with food, water and other supplies
- Make a family communications plan
- Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves
- Store breakable items such as bottled foods, glass and china in low cabinets
- Fasten heavy items such as pictures and mirrors securely to walls and away from beds, couches and anywhere people sit

During: Drop, Cover and Hold On

- Drop to the ground
- Take cover by getting under a sturdy table or desk. If there isn't a table or desk near you, cover your face and head with your arms and crouch in an inside corner of the building
- Hold on until the shaking stops
- Stay away from glass, windows. Outside doors and walls and anything that could fall on you such as light fixtures.
- Do not use a doorway. Many inside doorways are lightly constructed and do not offer protection.
- Stay inside until the shaking stops. Research shows that most injuries occur when people inside buildings attempt to move to a different location inside the building or try to leave.
- If you're outside move away from buildings, streetlights and utility wires
- If you're in a moving vehicle stop quickly and safely. Avoid stopping near or under buildings, trees, overpasses and utility wires.
- Proceed cautiously when earthquake stops. Avoid roads and bridges that might have been damaged by the quake.

After:

- Expect aftershocks which are usually less violent than the main quake but can be strong enough to do additional damage
- Help injured or trapped persons. Remember to help neighbors that need special help such as infants and the elderly. Do not move seriously injured people unless they are in immediate danger of further injury. Instead call for help.

- Listen to a battery operated radio for the latest emergency information
- Use the telephone for emergency calls

For more information please visit these websites:

- <http://www.ready.gov/earthquakes>
- <http://www.dropcoverholdon.org/>
- <http://www.earthquakecountry.info/roots/step1.html>
- <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>