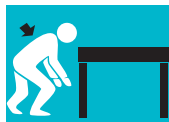
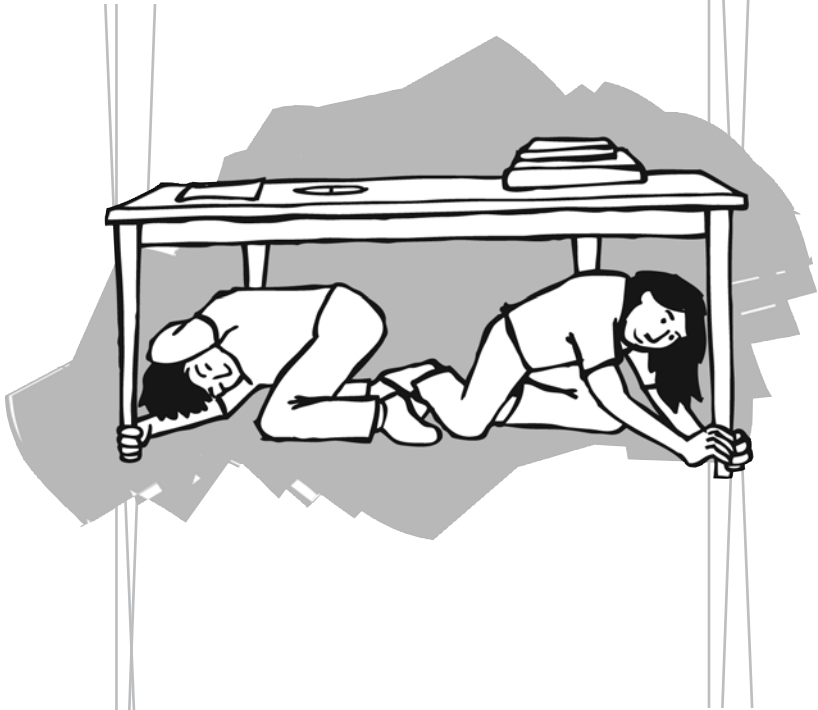


YUKON

EARTHQUAKE

Safety Guide



DROP



COVER



HOLD ON



WHY SHOULD I READ THIS GUIDE?

Yukon is in a “seismically active” area. This means that earthquakes can and do happen here. They usually occur far away from communities and do not affect people or buildings. We may occasionally feel a light shaking from an earthquake that happens several hundred kilometres away. These distant earthquakes usually cause no damage or injury. But if the centre of a major earthquake is in or very close to a community, damage and injury could occur.

Scientists measure the strength of earthquakes using the “Richter scale.” The higher the Richter scale number, the stronger the earthquake and the likelihood of damage and injury. A magnitude 3 earthquake is considered “minor”, a magnitude 6 earthquake is “strong”, and a magnitude 8 is “great”. A magnitude 8 earthquake that occurs in a town or city could cause major damage and injury.



YUKON GOVERNMENT / D. CROWE

There is no way to predict when a serious earthquake will occur, so it is important to prepare ahead of time. This means making our buildings and rooms safer before an earthquake happens and knowing what to do if an earthquake occurs. This guide explains what you can do to keep safe during an earthquake.



Most earthquakes last for just a few seconds and cause little or no damage or injury, but during a major earthquake close to a community, this is what can happen:

- Everything will begin to shake and move around.
- Books and other objects may fall off shelves.
- Pictures may fall off walls.
- Bookcases and other heavy pieces of furniture may fall over.
- Windows may shatter, sending pieces of glass flying through the air.
- Open doors may slam shut.
- Some parts of buildings may be damaged.
- Bridges and roads may crack or break.



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Parent **TIP**

You can make your home more earthquake-proof by:

- Attaching tall pieces of furniture to walls so that they won't fall over.
- Securing pictures to walls so that they won't fall down.
- Moving heavy objects to lower shelves.
- Installing shelf restraints to keep books and other objects from falling off shelves.

Home improvement stores sell a variety of items for these specific purposes.

BEFORE AN EARTHQUAKE HAPPENS

Make rooms safer

When people get hurt during earthquakes, it is often because of objects falling on them or glass flying through the air. Therefore, one of the most important things you can do is to check for hazards in rooms—and fix them—**before an earthquake happens**. This is now happening throughout Yukon schools, starting with schools that may be at higher risk of damage during a major earthquake.



WHEN THE SHAKING BEGINS

Drop, cover, and hold on

When an earthquake occurs, there is very little time to think or to act. Yukon schoolchildren, like students in British Columbia and California, learn the basic life-saving steps known as **drop, cover, and hold on**. Regular earthquake drills in Yukon schools reinforce these steps.

When earthquake shaking begins:

1. **DROP** down on your hands and knees before the earthquake knocks you down.
2. **TAKE COVER** by getting under a sturdy table or desk. If, and only if, there is nothing to hide under, go to an inside wall or get beside a piece of furniture that is close to the ground and can't fall on you, crouch down, and cover your neck and head with your arms and hands.
3. **HOLD ON** to the table or desk you are crouching under until the shaking stops. Keep holding on even if the table or desk moves across the floor. If you are not under a table or desk, **keep your head and neck covered**.

Stay away from windows. Don't go near bookshelves, filing cabinets, or other pieces of furniture or objects that could fall on you.

While the shaking is going on, count to 60. Earthquakes rarely last longer than 60 seconds, and counting will help you keep calm.

Do not use elevators. Do not go outside until the shaking stops.

Teachers or other staff members will make sure that schoolchildren with special needs are as safe as possible during an earthquake.



Not inside a room when the shaking begins?

In a hall or stairway? Go to an interior wall. Kneel with your back to the wall, place your head close to your knees, and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms.

In the library? Get away from bookcases that can fall on you. Get under a table or desk and cover your head and neck with your arms and hands.

In the gym? Take cover under sturdy bleachers or go to an interior wall. Kneel with your back to the wall, place your head close to your knees, and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms. Avoid outside walls and any hanging furniture that could fall, such as scoreboards or basketball hoops.

Outside? Stay outside and get away from buildings, trees, and overhead wires.

On the school bus? Stay in your seat and hold on to the seat in front of you.





Parent **TIP**

Driving? Pull over to the side of the road, stop, and set the parking brake. Avoid bridges and power lines. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking stops. If a power line falls on your car, stay inside until a trained person removes it.

In an arena or theatre when the shaking begins? Stay in your seat and protect your head and neck. Leave slowly and carefully when the shaking stops. Watch for objects that could fall on you.

In bed? Stay in bed, protect yourself with a pillow, and hold on. When the shaking stops and before you get out of bed, check for broken glass and other objects on the floor.



DROP



COVER



HOLD ON



Safety **TIP**

*You may have been told that the safest place to go in an earthquake is a doorway. **This is not true.** Doorways can be more dangerous than other parts of a building. You are safer under a table or desk than in a doorway. (For more information about this, visit the [Earthquake Facts & Fantasy](#) page on the US Geological Survey website, listed on the back cover.)*

WHEN THE SHAKING STOPS

Evacuate the building

When the initial shaking stops, teachers and students may have to leave the school because of potential damage or danger. As part of annual earthquake drills, Yukon schoolchildren learn how to evacuate their schools safely. They learn where to go and what to do once they get outside. Teachers are trained to keep their students calm and safe during evacuation. They know which route to use to leave the school and which alternative route to use in case the first one is blocked. Teachers or other staff members will make sure that schoolchildren with special needs are safely evacuated.



School critical incident teams will work with students, teachers and staff as soon as possible after an earthquake to provide emotional or psychological support to students and staff, if needed.



COMMUNICATION WITH PARENTS

The minutes and hours after a big earthquake will be stressful and frightening for many people. Parents will be worried about their children, and children will be worried about their parents. But this is also the time when emergency services will be responding to reports of damage and injury, and principals and other school staff will be taking action to protect students and communicate with parents.

X *Parents should not call the school for information about their children.* School telephone lines must be open for emergency calls.

X *Parents should not drive to their children's schools immediately after an earthquake.* School access routes must be kept clear for emergency vehicles.

✓ *Parents should listen to local radio stations* for information, instructions and status reports.

Parents will be told when and where to pick up their children. Parents will have to sign their students out when they pick them up. This is to make sure that every child is accounted for and safe. Schools will not allow a child to leave with anyone other than the child's parent or legal guardian—not even a family member or babysitter—unless that person has permission to do so. For this reason, parents should make sure that the information about their children at the school is up to date.

If an earthquake causes major damage in a community, Yukon's Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) may be asked to help out. EMO may use the radio to communicate with the public about what to do and where to go.

RADIO STATIONS

	CBC Radio One	CHON-FM	CKRW	CJUC
Beaver Creek	690 AM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Burwash Landing	105.1 FM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Carcross	94.5 FM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Carmacks	990 AM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Dawson	560 AM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Destruction Bay	105.1 FM	98.1 FM	98.7 FM	
Faro	105.1 FM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Haines Junction	103.5 FM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Mayo	1230 AM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Old Crow	101.1 FM	90.5 FM	88.9 FM	
Pelly Crossing	100.1 FM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Ross River	990 AM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Teslin	940 AM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Watson Lake	990 AM	90.5 FM	98.7 FM	
Whitehorse	94.5 FM	98.1 FM	96.1 FM 610 AM	92.5 FM



Parent

TIP

An important part of being prepared for an earthquake or any other emergency is to have a 72-hour home emergency safety kit.

Emergency services may not be able to get to everyone immediately after a major earthquake, so you need to prepare to survive on your own. This means having enough food, water and other supplies to last for at least three days. Basic services such as electricity, water, sewage treatment and telephones may be cut off for hours, days or possibly longer. Your emergency kit should contain items to help you manage without these essential services (e.g., battery-powered radio, flashlight, medications, valuable documents, money and pet food).

There are many websites with information about what to have in your home emergency kit. Some are listed on the back of this guide.

Safety

TIP

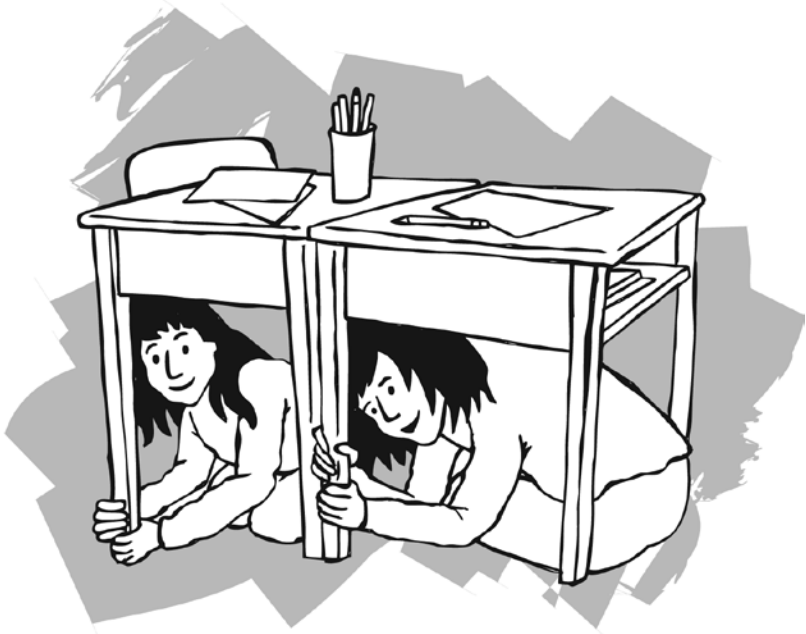
Aftershocks are common after earthquakes. Aftershocks can continue to happen for days or even weeks after an earthquake. Some may be large enough to cause more damage and injury. In the days and weeks after an earthquake, always be ready to drop, cover, and hold on.

A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT CHILDREN

Earthquakes are scary for everyone, but especially for children. To help reduce their fear, talk with them about what might happen before an earthquake occurs. Involve them in your home safety plan. Let them help prepare your home emergency kit. Ask them what game or toy they want to include.

After an earthquake, children will be under great stress. They will likely be frightened, their routine will probably be disrupted, and any aftershocks may cause them to re-live the experience of the original earthquake.

Parents and other adults tend to leave their children in order to deal with the many demands of the emergency, but this can be devastating to children. In fact, they need extra contact and support from parents in the early days after an earthquake. Whenever possible, parents should keep children close and include them in the recovery process.



DROP



COVER



HOLD ON

WHAT CAN I DO AT HOME?

Families can do earthquake drills at home. Follow these steps:

- 1.** Before your first drill, talk to your kids about what an earthquake sounds and feels like. If your kids have never experienced an earthquake, they may not immediately realize what is happening when one occurs. Tell them that when an earthquake begins, it sounds like a low rumbling that grows louder. They will feel a shaking, and the floor may start to move. Explain the facts calmly, but do not frighten your children with too much detail. Tell them that if an earthquake does happen, they will be safer if they know and practise what to do beforehand.
- 2.** Walk through your home with your kids to look for safe places to take cover. Walk outside, too, and look around your yard. Tell your children that if they are outside when an earthquake starts, they should stay outside and get away from buildings, trees, and overhead wires.
- 3.** When you are ready to begin the actual drill, shout, "Earthquake! Drop, cover, and hold on!"
- 4.** Drop to your hands and knees. Getting down on the floor is safer because it prevents you from falling when trying to move.
- 5.** Crawl under a sturdy desk or piece of furniture such as a table. If you can't do that, kneel with your back to the wall, place your head close to your knees, and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms.
- 6.** If you are under a piece of furniture, hold on to it until you announce the end of the drill. If you are not under a piece of furniture, stay where you are against the wall.

7. Say what would be happening during an actual earthquake so that it feels real and everyone has an idea of what to expect in an actual earthquake. For example, you can say, “The whole room is shaking! Dishes are crashing to the floor. Furniture is sliding on the floor. You hear loud noises everywhere!” While you are doing this, everyone else should be counting to 60. Counting helps to keep people calm, and earthquakes usually don’t last for more than 60 seconds.

8. Say that the earthquake is over.

9. Slowly come out from your hiding places. Discuss what damage may have occurred to decide whether and how you should get out of your home.

As part of your home earthquake safety plan, you and your children should decide on a meeting place and an alternative meeting place. Remember that telecommunications may be damaged by an earthquake, so it may be difficult or even impossible for parents and children to reach one another by landline or mobile telephone.

Watch the ShakeOutBC home earthquake drill with your family:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=OccRtr64G_A.



WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION?

Earthquakes and earthquake safety

embc.gov.bc.ca/em/hazard_preparedness/earthquake_preparedness.html

www.getprepared.gc.ca

www.hpw.gov.yk.ca/pm/seismic_program.html

www.fema.gov/earthquake

www.shakeoutbc.ca

www.earthquakecountry.org/dropcoverholdon

earthquake.usgs.gov/learn/topics/megaqk_facts_fantasy.php

Resources

www.shakeoutbc.ca/resources/

www.shakeout.org/downloads/broadcast/universal/ShakeOutDrillBroadcastSoundEffects.mp3

www.youtube.com/watch?v=nANnUNauD1c

www.fema.gov/earthquake-publications

For further information:

Yukon Emergency Measures Organization
867-667-5220 or 1-800-661-0408 extension 5220
www.community.gov.yk.ca/emo/index.html

If you have school-specific questions or concerns, contact the school directly.