

Identifying potential home hazards

All of Washington State has the potential of being impacted by a major earthquake. Earthquakes strike suddenly and without warning. When they occur, they cause the ground to undulate and shake, perhaps violently. Buildings – and their contents – are vulnerable to this rocking and rolling. Fortunately, experts teach how to secure homes to their foundations, and contents to wall studs.



30 minutes well spent

Take 30 minutes to walk through your home. Imagine the ground movement of a significant earthquake. Identify potential hazards by completing this worksheet.

1. Check your water heater. Is it securely fastened to the wall studs with heavy-duty metal strapping, top and bottom (and not metal plumber's tape)?

___yes ___no

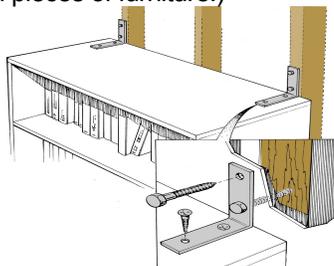
Does your water heater have flexible water and gas connectors?

___yes ___no

(See **Getting Ready** for instruction on securing your water heater.)

2. Tall pieces of furniture are especially vulnerable in earthquakes. Identify each bookcase, china hutch, and armoire which needs fastening.

(See **Getting Ready** for ideas on how to secure your tall pieces of furniture.)

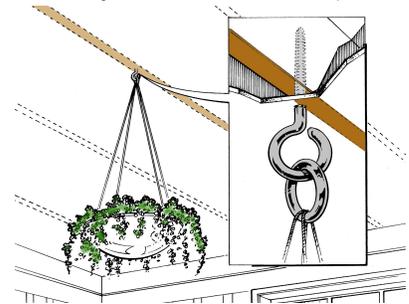


3. Identify heavy or breakable objects on high shelves. Pay especial attention to objects with sentimental value.

(Move heavy objects that are located on high shelves to low shelves. See **Getting Ready** for suggestions on how to secure your valuables.)

4. Identify computers, stereos, and televisions, and microwaves and other small appliances that need to be secured.

(See **Getting Ready** for suggestions on how to secure costly and valuable items.)



5. Identify hanging plants, especially in heavy baskets, and hanging lights near windows.

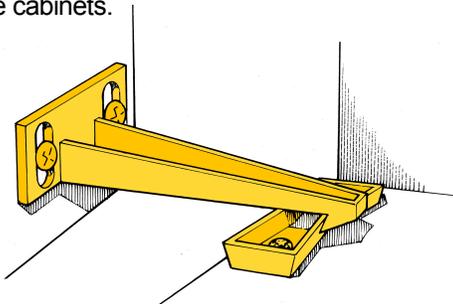
(See **Getting Ready** for ideas on how to secure your hanging plants and objects.)

6. Identify mirrors, heavily-framed pictures, and framed artwork that needs to be secured to wall studs.

(Pay especial attention to artwork, pictures, and mirrors over beds. Consider moving these to another location. See **Getting Ready** for suggestions on how to secure your artwork.)

7. Identify kitchen, bedroom, and garage cabinets that need to be secured to keep their contents inside during the ground shaking.

(See **Getting Ready** for suggestions on how to secure cabinets.



8. Inspect the foundation of your home. Is your home securely fastened to it?

____yes ____no

(Check with your local city office which issues building permits for regulations.)

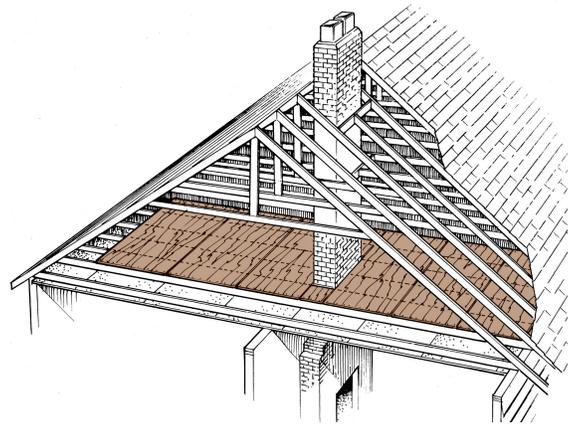
9. Does your chimney have loose bricks?

____yes ____no

Has your attic been reinforced with ply wood to help prevent chimney bricks from falling into living areas?

____yes ____no

(See **Getting Ready** for a method to reinforce your attic.)



10. Identify poisons, toxics, or solvents in breakable containers that are located in high or dangerous locations.

(See **Getting Ready** for suggestions on separating dangerous chemicals, and securing them to prevent spills during earthquakes.)

