
CHAPTER IV - NATURAL DISASTERS

1. EARTHQUAKES

Posts in particular which could experience shocks of considerable magnitude are those situated on or near the world's earthquake belts which are located in the following areas:

- Pacific coasts of North and South America
- Eastern coast of Japan
- Mid Pacific
- East Indies
- West Indies
- New Zealand
- Southern edge of the Himalayas
- Greece, Turkey, Italy, Mediterranean to Central Atlantic

What could happen

An earthquake is often announced by a loud noise like the rushing of a train. Initial earth movements and swaying of structures caused by an earthquake could be followed some time later (often hours or days) by after-shocks, usually of decreasing severity.

The actual movement of the ground in an earthquake is seldom the direct cause of death or injury. Most casualties result from falling objects and debris, because the shocks can shake, damage or

demolish buildings and other structures. Earthquakes can also trigger landslides and generate huge ocean waves called tsunamis (seismic sea waves), each of which can cause great damage.

Buildings don't automatically collapse in earthquakes. Some, such as timber frame houses, may withstand shock very well. However, chimneys, parapets, ceiling plaster and light fixtures may fall. There could be flying glass from broken windows; fires may be caused by broken chimneys and gas lines, and the danger aggravated by broken water mains. Fallen power lines are another hazard, and could leave communities without power for days.

What you can do to be prepared

There are many things you can do to reduce the dangers from earthquakes to yourself, your family and others.

- Check your home for earthquake hazards. Bolt down or provide other strong support for water heaters and gas appliances, since fire damage can result from broken gas lines and appliance connections. Use flexible connections wherever possible. Place large and heavy