



## NEWS RELEASE

STATE OF NEBRASKA

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drill is Oct. 16

#### Practice What to do in the Event of an Earthquake

No Nebraska community is immune from natural hazards, and earthquakes are just one of the many natural hazards Nebraskans could face.

“While rarer in Nebraska than in some places, earthquakes are still a potential risk, and it is one of the contingencies we plan for here at Nebraska Emergency Management Agency,” said Bryan Tuma, NEMA assistant director. “For the Great ShakeOut on Oct. 16, we are asking Nebraskans to take a minute out of their day to drop, cover and hold on, as a practice for what you would do during an actual earthquake.

“Even if earthquakes are rare in our state, they do happen where you or your family travels, so please plan accordingly and be safe,” Tuma said.”

The Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drill is an annual opportunity for people in homes, schools and organizations to practice what to do during earthquakes, and to improve preparedness. Millions of people worldwide will practice how to *Drop, Cover and Hold On* at 10:16 a.m. on Oct. 16.

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), the two largest earthquakes to strike Nebraska occurred March 28, 1964, near Merriman and Nov. 15, 1877, in eastern Nebraska. Both were 5.1 magnitude earthquakes and while classified as a moderate event they caused considerable damage. The 1964 earthquake was felt in Montana, South Dakota and Wyoming, and the 1877 earthquake was felt in parts of Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, South Dakota and Wisconsin.

Drop, Cover and Hold On is the established protocol to follow to reduce injury and death during earthquakes.

“We want all Nebraskans to know that they should drop to the ground, take cover by getting under a sturdy desk or table and hold on until the shaking stops,” Tuma said. “If it's not possible to get to the floor to safely take cover, find an inside corner of the room near you that is away from windows and objects that could fall on you.”

Those interested in participating in the ShakeOut are encouraged to first register online at [www.shakeout.org](http://www.shakeout.org).

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Federal, State, and local emergency management experts and other official preparedness organizations all agree that “**Drop, Cover, and Hold On**” is the appropriate action to reduce injury and death during earthquakes. Great ShakeOut earthquake drills ([www.shakeout.org](http://www.shakeout.org)) are opportunities to practice how to protect ourselves during earthquakes.

You cannot tell from the initial shaking if an earthquake will suddenly become intense...so always Drop, Cover, and Hold On immediately!

- **DROP** to the ground (before the earthquake drops you!),
- Take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy desk or table, and
- **HOLD ON** to your shelter and be prepared to move with it until the shaking stops.



If there is no table or desk near you, drop to the ground and then if possible move to an inside corner of the room. Be in a crawling position to protect your vital organs and be ready to move if necessary, and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms.

Do not move to another location or outside. Earthquakes occur without any warning and may be so violent that you cannot run or crawl. You are more likely to be injured if you try to move around during strong shaking. Also, you will never know if the initial jolt will turn out to be start of the big one...and that’s why you should always Drop, Cover, and Hold On immediately!

These are guidelines for most situations. Read below to learn how to protect yourself in other situations and locations, or visit [www.dropcoverholdon.org](http://www.dropcoverholdon.org).



**If you are unable to Drop, Cover, and Hold On:** If you have difficulty getting safely to the floor on your own, get as low as possible, protect our head and neck, and move away from windows or other items that can fall on you.

**In a wheelchair:** Lock your wheels and remain seated until the shaking stops. Always protect your head and neck with your arms, a pillow, a book, or whatever is available.



# Recommended Earthquake Safety Actions

**In bed:** If you are in bed, hold on and stay there, protecting your head with a pillow. You are less likely to be injured staying where you are. Broken glass on the floor has caused injury to those who have rolled to the floor or tried to get to doorways.

**In a high-rise:** Drop, Cover, and Hold On. Avoid windows and other hazards. Do not use elevators. Do not be surprised if sprinkler systems or fire alarms activate.

**In a store:** When Shaking starts, Drop Cover and Hold On. A shopping cart or getting inside clothing racks can provide some protection. If you must move to get away from heavy items on high shelves, drop to the ground first and crawl only the shortest distance necessary. Whenever you enter any retail store, take a moment to look around: What is above and around you that could move or fall during an earthquake? Then use your best judgment to stay safe.

**Outdoors:** Move to a clear area if you can safely do so; avoid power lines, trees, signs, buildings, vehicles, and other hazards.

**Driving:** Pull over to the side of the road, stop, and set the parking brake. Avoid overpasses, bridges, power lines, signs and other hazards. Stay inside the vehicle until the shaking is over. If a power line falls on the car, stay inside until a trained person removes the wire.

**In a stadium or theater:** Stay at your seat or drop to the floor between rows and protect your head and neck with your arms. Don't try to leave until the shaking is over. Then walk out slowly watching for anything that could fall in the aftershocks.

**Near the shore:** Drop, Cover, and Hold On until the shaking stops. If severe shaking lasts twenty seconds or more, immediately evacuate to high ground as a Tsunami might have been generated by the earthquake. Move inland two miles or to land that is at least 100 feet above sea level immediately. Don't wait for officials to issue a warning. Walk quickly, rather than drive, to avoid traffic, debris and other hazards.

**Below a dam:** Dams can fail during a major earthquake. Catastrophic failure is unlikely, but if you live downstream from a dam, you should know flood-zone information and have prepared an evacuation plan.

## **MYTH – Head for the Doorway:**

An enduring earthquake image of California is a collapsed adobe home with the doorframe as the only standing part. From this came our belief that a doorway is the safest place to be during an earthquake. True – if you live in an old, unreinforced adobe house. In modern houses, doorways are no stronger than any other part of the house. You are safer under a table.

## **More information:**

[www.shakeout.org/dropcoverholdon](http://www.shakeout.org/dropcoverholdon)

[www.dropcoverholdon.org](http://www.dropcoverholdon.org)

[www.earthquakecountry.org/dropcoverholdon](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/dropcoverholdon)