



News Release

Shelby County Office of Preparedness



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● PREVENT ● PROTECT ● MITIGATE ● RESPOND ● RECOVER

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FEBRUARY IS EARTHQUAKE AWARENESS MONTH

December 16, 1811 through February 7, 1812, three large destructive earthquakes and hundreds of aftershocks changed the topography of what is now known as the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ). “Shelby County lies within the NMSZ - which remains active today,” said Dale Lane, Shelby County Office of Preparedness Director. “Will history repeat itself? There is a chance of a magnitude 6 or larger occurring in the next 50 years. We encourage you to review our earthquake survival tips during February, Earthquake Awareness Month.”

BEFORE THE EARTHQUAKE: Make a plan. Visit <https://www.ready.gov/make-a-plan>

- Take Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training: Visit www.staysafeshelby.us.

- **Build a disaster kit:** Include: flashlight, batteries, battery-powered NOAA radio, cell phone, charger, first-aid kit, bottled water, nonperishable food, helmet, boots, gloves, goggles, metal whistle, tools, cash, pet supplies, and important documents.



- **Identify Hazards:**
 - Relocate heavy items away from beds, couches, or where people sleep.
 - Secure heavy objects (bookcases, water heaters) to the wall.
 - Move breakable items to the bottom of lower cabinets.
 - Practice how to turn off gas, water, and electricity safely.
 - Have an ABC fire extinguisher on every level of the home (near exits).
 - Have a smoke and carbon monoxide detector on every level of the home.
 - Create a digital household inventory.
- **Family Communications Plan:**
 - Keep devices charged.
 - Program emergency numbers in cell phones.
 - Learn to text!
 - Hold earthquake, evacuation, and shelter-in-place drills.
 - Have a meeting place outside the home and in the community.
 - Have an out-of-state contact to call and check in with.
 - Register with the American Red Cross “Safe and Well” web site. www.redcross.org.
- **Minimize Financial Hardships:** Organize important documents. Have a digital copy available.

DURING THE EARTHQUAKE:

- **INSIDE:** Don't run outside or head for a doorway.
 - Find a safe place to **DROP, COVER, HOLD!** in each room.

- **Bed:** Lie face down, hold on, and be still. Protect your head with pillows.
 - **Crowded store:** Don't run for an exit. Move away from shelving. DROP, COVER, HOLD!
 - **Wheelchair or mobile impairment:** Stay put. Lock wheels. Brace yourself in place.
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- **OUTSIDE:** Avoid buildings, trees, or electrical power lines. DROP, COVER, HOLD!
 - **Driving:** Pull over. Stay inside with seatbelt on. Avoid overpasses or underpasses. If power lines fall on your vehicle, call 911, stay inside and wait for assistance.
 - **Stadium:** Stay seated. Protect your head with your hands. Exit if safe to do so.

AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE:

- Stay indoors until the shaking stops. If safe to exit, use stairs instead of an elevator.
- Put on **Personal Protective Equipment:** helmet, boots, gloves, goggles, reflective vest, and a N95 dust mask. Have a flashlight and a metal whistle.
- Check for injuries. Give first-aid to yourself and then others (if trained to do so).
- Check for gas, water, or electrical problems. Evacuate if you smell gas.
- Open closets and cabinets slowly and carefully. Watch out for falling debris.
- Use landlines for emergency calls only. Text to get messages out.
- Listen to NOAA radio. Follow instructions from emergency authorities.
- Prepare for aftershocks.

RESOURCES:

- View "When the Earth Shakes" video: <https://youtu.be/YXxPTAhMGLI>
- Center for Earthquake Research and Information (CERI): www.memphis.edu/ceri
- United States Geological Survey (USGS): www.usgs.gov

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