

Public Advisory
December 2003

Earthquake Damage Cleanup Precautions



HAZARD PROTECTION FOR RESIDENTS AND WORKERS

DTSC is one of six Boards and Departments within the California Environmental Protection Agency. DTSC's mission is to restore, protect and enhance the environment, to ensure public health, environmental quality and economic vitality, by regulating hazardous waste, conducting and overseeing cleanups, and developing and promoting pollution prevention.

State of California



California
Environmental
Protection Agency



Please take the following precautions to protect yourself from possible injury upon entering property that has been damaged:

- Do not enter any building you feel is not structurally safe.
- If you have any doubt about whether a building is safe, wait until it can be inspected by the city or county.
- Make sure natural gas has been turned off at the meter before entering.

Hazard Protection

- Wear a dust mask when sifting through debris.
- Head coverings and eye protection (glasses or goggles) are advised.
- Wear sturdy shoes to prevent puncture wounds.
- Wear gloves.
- Be aware of hidden hazards wherever you walk.
- Wash up immediately after finishing work.

Household Hazards

1. Avoid contact with any damaged containers of cleaning solvents, paints, strong caustics or acids (e.g., drain cleaners, oven cleaners, pool chemicals), used crankcase oil, pesticides, herbicides, and fungicides, aerosol cans containing hazardous materials, photographic solutions, lead acid batteries, or other similar products that may be toxic, flammable or corrosive.
2. Local officials will arrange to collect and properly manage hazardous household wastes. For information about your local area, call (800) CLEANUP.
3. Buildings constructed before 1980 may have asbestos materials such as roofs, floor tiles, acoustic ceilings (cottage cheese type), insulation, sound proofing, cement pipes, heating ducts, and pipe coverings. These materials need to be handled and disposed of properly. Homeowners should have an appropriate contractor remove asbestos debris and should not attempt to remove this debris themselves. Only licensed and trained demolition contractors may do asbestos removal work. For further information regarding asbestos related materials call your local Air Pollution Control District.

DTSC Hazardous Waste Management Program (916) 255-3617
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or visit www.dtsc.ca.gov