

Veterinary Insurance Program



Veterinary Loss Prevention Program

Earthquake action plans in the veterinary setting



Earthquake action plans in the veterinary setting

Trainer's overview

To have your employees get the most out of their training sessions, it is suggested that:

- The training sessions should be conducted in a relatively quiet and uninterrupted environment.
- The sessions should be held the same time and day of the month (e.g., first Tuesday at 12:30).
- Employee handouts should be given out along with writing utensils.
- The trainers guide, employee handout and any references are reviewed.
- The sessions are kept to a maximum of 20 minutes.
- Personal examples of incidents or prevention techniques that worked for you should be included.
- Plan and execute 'Drop, Cover, Hold On' drills.
<https://www.earthquakecountry.org/step5/>
- All employees present will sign the safety training sign-in sheet for documentation purposes.
- If some employees were not present, then a second training session should be given.



The Employee Health & Safety exposures and loss prevention efforts are the responsibility of your company. Safehold services are intended to assist you and your management in evaluating potential exposures to loss and methods to minimize exposure. These services do not necessarily include every possible loss potential, code violation, or exception to good management practice.

Earthquake action plans in the veterinary setting

Trainer's guide

What do you need to know in an earthquake situation?

Earthquakes can strike anytime and anywhere; however, California is particularly at risk. Damage as a result of an earthquake will vary greatly depending on the depth, location, duration, and magnitude.

Your individual site and situation will impact ground shaking depending on the type of soils and foundation of your building, and the building's construction and where you are in it during the earthquake.

Even though earthquakes are generally uncommon, most people have experienced or at least seen the results of an earthquake, so there should be some prior awareness with the resulting hazards.

Who is at risk?

Each clinic must evaluate their own situation and employees should know the following:

- Location of nearest exit
- Familiarity with the evacuation plans specific to the site.
- Hazard recognition such as large glass windows
- Locations of first aid kits and/or earthquake response kits
- If customers are in the clinic
- Animal housing locations
- Fastest route to evacuate the animals
- If all the animals are ambulatory, and the plan for getting ones that are not to safety
- Process for verifying that all animals and people are safely evacuated

Best practice

A Best Practice for clinic management is to recognize that the most effective mechanism to minimize building, equipment damage, and human/animal injuries is through a combination of engineering and work practice controls.

Engineering controls

Supervisors on a regular basis shall inspect and update as necessary:

- Evacuation plans
- Emergency response kits
- First aid kits, be sure all employees know where the kits are stored.
- Emergency water, food, flashlights, radio, cell and phone chargers. All employees should know where these emergency supplies are stored.
- Large objects secured to the building, such as file cabinets, bookcases, or tall furniture
- Water heaters secured to the building's wall studs with metal strapping
- TVs and computer monitors secured to walls, stands, or desks
- Chemicals stored in cabinets with heavy duty latches or bolts
- Heaviest items stored on the lower shelving
- Gas shut-off valves are accessible and clearly identified, including an appropriate shut-off wrench. Be sure to identify who is responsible for this task and everyone is knows where the tools are stored.
- Conduct drills for gas shut-off and convene after the drill or earthquake to see how it went and what should be changed.

Earthquake action plans in the veterinary setting

Trainer's guide (continued)

Work practice controls

Work practice controls are meant to reduce the likelihood of exposure through regular refresher training, reminding and/or reinforcing of policies and procedures. Controls include, but are not limited to:

- Identify “safe places” in your clinic such as small rooms, bathrooms, and under furniture. The shortest distance to a “safe place” is best. Injury statistics show that moving more than 5 feet to a safe place increases your chance for injury.
- Never go to the stairs. Stairs can have a different “resonant frequency” and may sway separately from the main part of the building.
- It is better to evacuate after the shaking has stopped. As earthquakes are rapid events, your best chance for safety is finding a *safe place*.
- Do not reenter the building. Aftershocks are expected and your building's structure has very likely been compromised.
- Verify that all animals have updated ID tags. In case of runaway, escape, or loss, all animals should be in the best possible position for rescue and safe return.
- Have a weekly log to ensure that necessary animal supplies such as food, water, medicine, first aid and even toys are quickly accessible after an earthquake.
- Ask animal owners to provide photos of pets in case of separation during the emergency phases of the earthquake.
- In most situations, if you feel shaking or get an earthquake alert, immediately ‘Drop, Cover and Hold On’. Practice this technique often.
<https://www.earthquakecountry.org/step5/>

Questions for discussion

Question: Who has responsibility for implementing an earthquake action plan policy?

Answer: This is the responsibility of management.

Question: Who has the responsibility of knowing one's own action plan in case of earthquake?

Answer: This is the responsibility of the entire staff.

Question: What are some preventative measures that can be taken prior to an earthquake to minimize loss?

Answer: Readily available checklists and an action plan that is known to all staff members for immediate utilization as an earthquake begins. Knowing where the safe spaces are in the building.
<https://www.earthquakecountry.org/event/sysjune22/>

Question: What are some organizations that would be helpful to set up a relationship with that can be used during an emergency?

Answer: It is beneficial to know of any pet-friendly hotels/motels, shelters, and boarding facilities in the local area. Other animal hospitals and local authorities may also be helpful to know for potential collaboration during all the stages of the emergency.

Question: Where else can I go to obtain additional safety information?

Answer: Many websites can be helpful. Examples include:

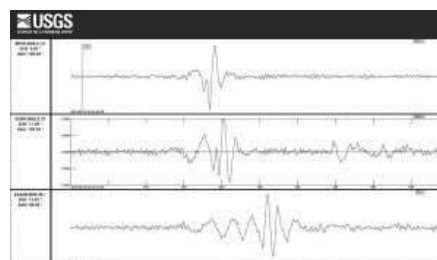
www.ready.gov/earthquakes

www.redcross.org/prepare/disaster/earthquake

www.fema.gov/helping-pets

<https://www.earthquakecountry.org/sevensteps/>

Other questions?



Please complete the sign-in sheet

Earthquake action plans in the veterinary setting



Employee handout

Overview

Earthquakes are a fact of life, and no part of the United States is totally exempt from occasional tremors or even intensive ground shaking. Earthquakes are not predictable or preventable. However, the preparation steps you take as an employee and business will determine your health and safety, along with your customers and patients.

A Best Practice for clinic management is to recognize that the most effective mechanism to minimize building, equipment damage, and injuries is through a combination of engineering and work practice controls.

Engineering controls

Supervisors on a regular basis shall inspect and update:

- Evacuation plans
- Emergency response kits
- First aid kits
- Emergency water and food supplies
- Large objects secured to the building, such as file cabinets, bookcases, or tall furniture
- Water heaters secured to the building's wall studs with metal strapping
- TVs and computer monitors secured to walls, stands, or desks
- Chemicals stored in cabinets with heavy duty latches or bolts
- Heaviest items stored on the lower shelving
- Gas shut-off valves are accessible and clearly identified, including an appropriate shut-off wrench

Work practice controls

Work practice controls are meant to reduce the likelihood of exposure through regular refresher training, reminding and/or reinforcing of policies and procedures. Controls include, but are not limited to:

Identifying “safe places” in your clinic: These places may include small rooms, bathrooms, and under furniture. The shortest distance to a “safe place” is best. Injury statistics show that moving more than 5 feet to a safe place increases your chance for injury.

Never going to the stairs: Stairs can have a different “resonant frequency” and may sway separately from the main part of the building.

Avoiding re-entrance to the building: Aftershocks are expected, and your building's structure has very likely been compromised.

Verifying that all animals have updated ID tags: In case of runaway, escape, or loss, all animals should be in the best possible position for rescue and safe return.

Having a weekly log: This helps ensure animal supplies such as food, water, medicine, first aid, and even toys are quickly accessible after an earthquake.

Asking animal owners to provide photos of pets: This is in case of separation during the emergency phases of the earthquake.

