

HouseMaster shares tips on what to look for after an earthquake strikes

Southern Californians who are dealing with the aftermath of a 6.4-magnitude earthquake should take extra precaution with their properties

SOMERVILLE, NJ, USA, July 5, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The largest earthquake to strike Southern California in 20 years hit on the Fourth of July near the city of Ridgecrest, California.

A 6.4-magnitude earthquake, it was felt more than 150 miles away in Los Angeles. While the quake resulted in a few injuries and structure fires in Ridgecrest, the toll could have been far worse. There were no reported deaths resulting from the quake, but there is damage and continued aftershocks, causing potential nightmares and unease for property owners.



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"I used to live in San Diego for some time and have dealt with earthquakes — as anyone who has gone through one can attest, it is a scary, eerie experience," said HouseMaster President and CEO Kathleen Kuhn. "We want to offer our customers, partners and everyone on the West Coast dealing with this advice on how to handle the aftermath of these natural disasters."

Building damage can occur where you least expect it after earthquakes. In the aftermath, it's crucial to watch every step you take. Here are a handful of tips to help residents in those hours after a quake hits.

☐ Ensure the building will not collapse. Examine everything — the walls, floors, doors, staircases, and windows — to make sure the building is not in danger of collapsing. Also watch for loose plaster, drywall, and ceilings that could fall.

☐ Rule out any gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Immediately turn off the gas — ideally using the outside main valve — and call the gas company from a neighbor's home. Worth noting: Gas must be turned back on by a professional.

☐ Look for damage to the electrical system. If you see sparks or broken or frayed wires, or if you smell burning insulation, turn off the electricity at the main fuse box or circuit breaker. If there's water on your path to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first.

☐ Check for sewage and water line damage. If you suspect your sewage lines are damaged,

avoid using the toilets and call a plumber. If water pipes are damaged, contact the water company and avoid using water from the tap. In the meantime, melt ice cubes or gather safe water from undamaged water heaters.

☐ Identify unreinforced masonry structures for damage. These structures — including chimneys — are particularly susceptible to damage from any earth movement. Look for any new cracks or signs of shifting. The larger the crack, the more movement and greater reason to be concerned. While the exterior of chimneys may look okay, there may be damage inside, which could mean the backup of dangerous exhaust gases into the house. As a precautionary measure, have the interior of the chimney inspected.

☐ Check metal vents should for separation at joints. This could also lead to the escape of harmful gases into the home.

Consumers looking for more information can visit the [Seismic Safety Commission's website](#).

About HouseMaster:

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