

How to Return to Work Safely

Washington State is earthquake country. The Nisqually earthquake of February 28th reminds us of the need to be prepared. The following list will help you prepare your work area as Washingtonians return to work.

- Special care should be taken in the initial clean up of your work area; wear heavy shoes and heavy work gloves during the clean up. Beware of sharp items that could cause injury.
- As you go about picking up objects around your work area use safety precautions when lifting heavy objects.
- Once the initial clean up is complete, take the following measures to ensure your work area will be safe in future quakes.
- Conduct a thorough survey of your work area. Look for potential hazards like unsecured boxes, plants, books, computers, etc.
- Your computer, monitor, fax machine, telephone, speakers etc. should be secured with either thumb lock, earthquake matting or industrial strength velcro.
- Determine if your bookcase or file cabinet has been bolted to the structural elements of the building.
- Remove all heavy objects from high shelves.
- Keep the wheels of all freestanding cabinets locked at all times.
- File cabinets and drawers should always be locked in the closed position.
- Bookcases of 3 or more shelves in height should have a blocking device such as a bungee cord, cable or shelf lip installed. Bookcases with lockable covers should always be closed and locked.
- Pictures, map boards, bulletin boards, etc. should be securely attached to a stud in the wall. Velcro or earthquake putty may also be placed behind the pictures or boards to further ensure safety.
- Art objects should be secured with earthquake wax, or velcro.
- Prepare a disaster preparedness kit for under your desk. Essential items include water, non-perishable food items, a whistle, first aid items, heavy-duty trash bags and other personal items including prescription medications.
- For more information on earthquake preparedness check the state emergency management website at: www.wa.gov/wsem.
- The statewide earthquake drill will be conducted, April 26th at 9:45 a.m.
- Remember, when the ground starts to shake, "Drop, Cover and Hold."



**Washington Military Department,
Emergency Management Division**