



## Safety Director Message

### Safety Measures Following New Jersey Earthquake: Inspections and Precautions

Earlier today, we experienced an earthquake that originated in New Jersey. Although the earthquake was relatively small, the Safety Director urges agencies to take the following steps:

- Inspect your property to determine if any damage exists, paying particular attention to walls, foundation and steps. If you notice damage, take pictures. If such damage exists, please contact your claims administrator for assistance in reporting to insurance coverage.
- Check utility lines, as follows:
  - Check for gas leaks. If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and quickly leave the building. Turn off the gas, using the outside main valve if you can. If you turn off the gas for any reason, it must be turned back on by a professional. Call the gas company from a neighbor's home.
  - Look for electrical system damage. 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 you have to step in water to get to the fuse box or circuit breaker, call an electrician first for advice.
  - Check for sewage and water line damage. If you suspect 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. You can obtain safe water from undamaged water heaters or by melting ice cubes.
- Watch for loose plaster, drywall, and ceilings that could fall.

- Use battery-powered lanterns or flashlights to inspect your home. Kerosene lanterns, torches, candles, and matches may tip over or ignite flammables inside.
- Inspect the entire length of chimneys carefully for damage. Cracks in chimneys can be the cause of a fire years later.

If you have any questions, please contact your Risk Control Consultant.