

# Safety after a disaster

## Earthquake

After a disaster, property damage may cause unusual and additional safety hazards. Many disaster-related injuries and deaths occur during cleanup. Here’s what to check:

Item	Action	Status
<b>Footwear</b>	Wear shoes in all areas near debris or broken glass.	
<b>Spills</b>	Immediately clean up spilled medicines, drugs and other potentially harmful materials. Use extreme caution when cleaning up spilt chemicals; they may have mixed with others during the earthquake and could cause harmful effects. Consult MSDS and be aware of the hazards of mixed chemicals. Open windows for ventilation and wear proper personal protective equipment (PPE) when cleaning spilt chemicals. If you feel any health effects from the material you are handling, stop what you’re doing and seek medical help.	
<b>Pipes (Gas and water)</b>	Inspect for leaking gas lines by smell only; do not use candles, matches or open flame. If you smell gas, open all windows and doors so gas can escape. Shut off the main valve at your gas meter, leave the building immediately, and notify authorities of the leak. Do not re-enter the building until repairs have been made. If water pipes are broken, shut off the main valve that brings water into the building.	
<b>Toilets</b>	Check to see that sewage lines are intact before flushing toilets.	
<b>Electrical systems</b>	If the building is properly wired, internal trouble with the electricity is unlikely. If there is a short circuit, turn off the electricity at the meter box.	