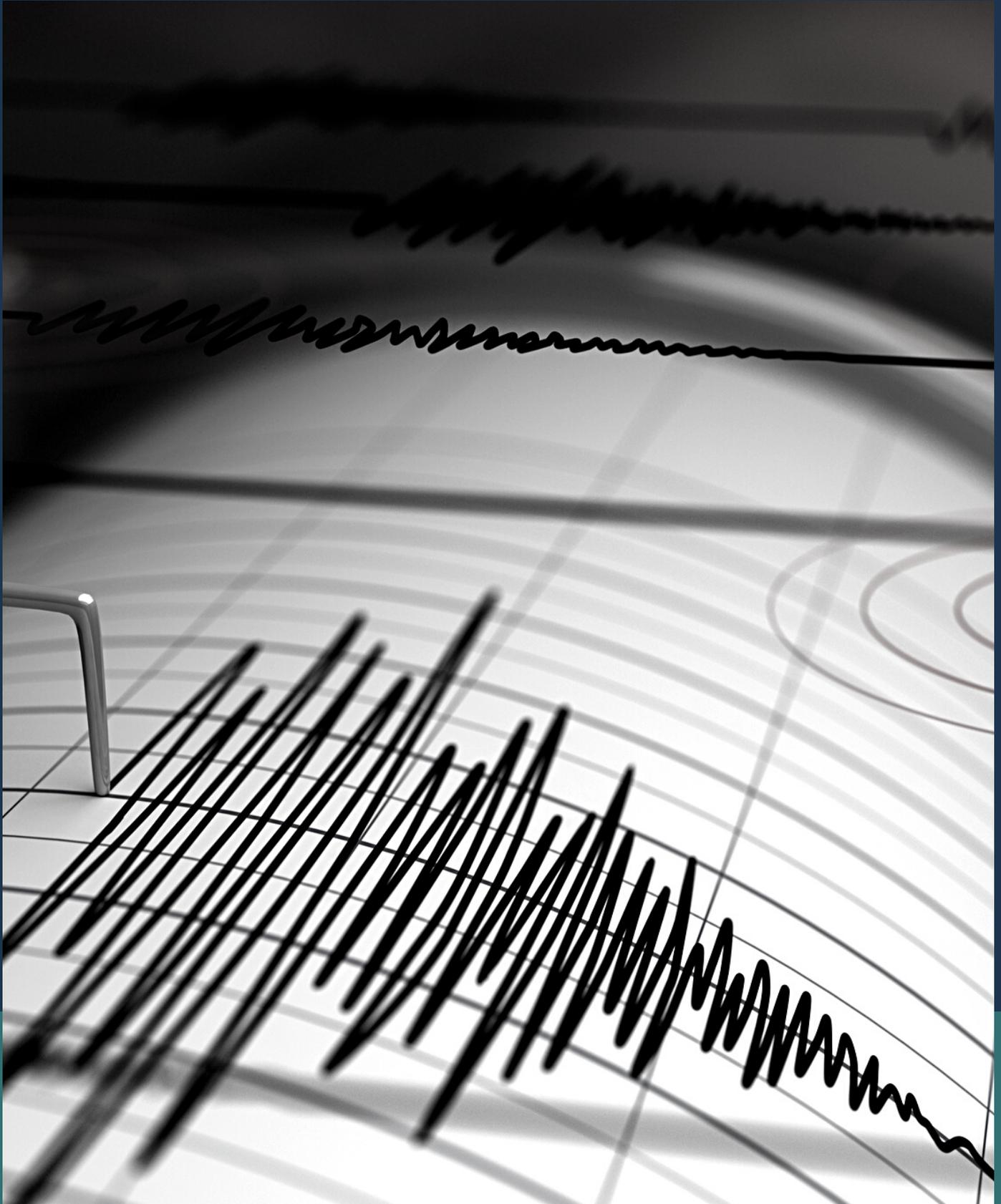




Earthquake Coverage

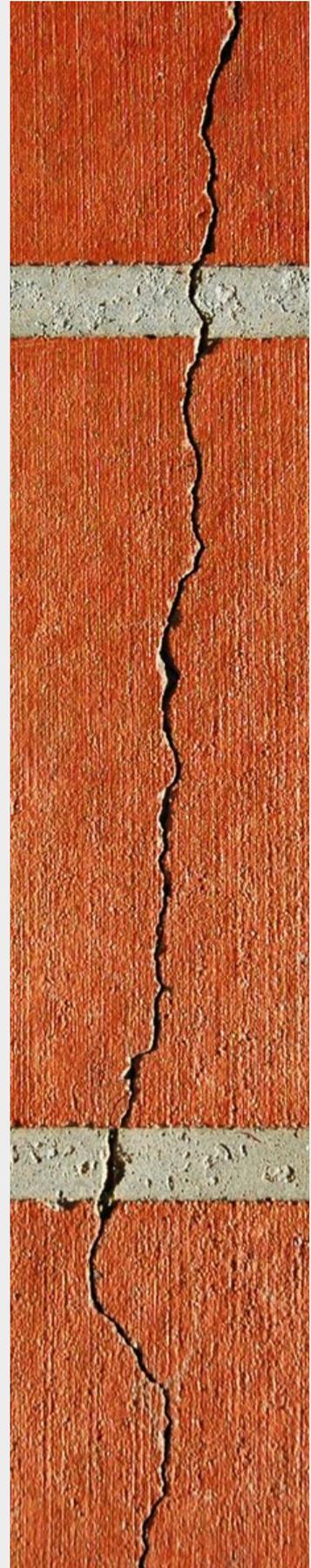


Understanding Your Earthquake Risk

Damage sustained by an earthquake to your home or property will typically not be covered under your homeowner's insurance policy. This means, in the event of a quake, if you do not have an earthquake endorsement on your homeowner's insurance policy or a standalone earthquake policy, you will be on the hook for covering repairs or the loss of your property.

Earthquakes in South Carolina have the potential to cause catastrophic damage, yet most people don't buy earthquake coverage because they think it's too expensive or that an earthquake will never happen to them. However, the entire state of South Carolina is considered to have a moderate to high risk for earthquakes with approximately 10 to 15 earthquakes recorded annually, according to the South Carolina Emergency Management Division (SCEMD).

Most homeowners or renters are surprised that earthquake coverage is more affordable than they imagined. It is a good idea to carry an earthquake endorsement or policy if you are financially able to do so. As always, talk to a trusted insurance agent or company to help decide if this type of coverage is right for you and your needs.



The Basics of Earthquake Coverage

- Earthquake insurance typically only covers direct damage to the property resulting from the shaking of an earthquake. Indirect damage, such as fire and water damage from burst gas and water pipes, is covered under a homeowner's policy.
- The deductible for earthquake insurance is usually 10%–20% of the coverage limit. For example, if your home is insured for \$200,000 a 10% deductible would be \$20,000.
- Depending on the policy, there may be separate deductibles. Your home, your belongings, and outside structures like detached garages and fences may all have individual deductibles.
- Some policies may pay up to the total of one or more of the coverage limits if the damage is more than the coverage limits. Always check with your insurance agent to learn how the deductible may work for your earthquake coverage.
- Typically, all earthquake events in a 72-hour (three-day) period are considered one event — with one claim and one set of deductibles. Damage caused by aftershocks more than 72 hours after the first quake could mean a second claim with a second set of deductibles.
- Even if you don't think the damage to your home is greater than your deductible, let your insurance company know if an earthquake damages your home. A qualified professional should inspect your home for hidden structural and cosmetic damage.

Before a Quake

- Make an emergency plan and practice it with your family. This includes where you will shelter, where you will meet after, and securing valuables and important papers.
- Download the SCEMD Emergency App for information.
- Consider your insurance needs and create a home inventory so that in the event of a loss, you will be able to correctly file a claim on damaged and lost property.

During a Quake

- If you're inside, drop to the ground, take cover by getting under a sturdy table or piece of furniture, and hold on until the shaking stops.
- Stay away from glass windows and outside doors.
- Do not use elevators.
- If you're outside, move away from buildings, street lights, and utility wires.
- If you're in a car, stop as quickly as safety permits, avoid parking under trees, near buildings, overpasses, or utility wires.

After a Quake

- Be mindful of aftershocks.
- Seek treatment of any injuries.
- If it is safe, assess the damage, take photos, and then mitigate further damages.
- Contact your insurance agent or company right away.

Make a Plan for Your Family and Pets

When planning to be resilient from a catastrophic event, such as an earthquake, fire, or flood, insurance needs to be one of the first considerations. Do you have enough coverage? Do you need additional endorsements? Has your financial or living situation changed since you purchased your policy? All of these are great questions to consider when evaluating how prepared you are for a disaster.

Every home should have an **emergency plan** and each member of the household should know what to do before, during, and after a catastrophic event. This plan needs to include having an **emergency kit** packed and easily accessible. A good emergency kit includes enough food and water for each member of the family and your pets for up to three days, medications, important documents, flashlights, batteries, and more. You can find a full list of items to include in your emergency kit at doi.sc.gov/stormready.

Establishing a **Catastrophe Savings Account (CSA)** should also be considered as part of your emergency preparedness. A CSA allows you to prepare for the financial impact of a disaster and save on taxes. CSAs are established at a state or federally chartered bank and the money can only be held in an interest-bearing account. You can learn more about CSAs on our website, by visiting doi.sc.gov/CSA.





We recommend downloading the Home Inventory App from the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC) for an easy way to create and protect a record of your belongings. Having a list will help you not forget items to include in a claim if they were damaged or lost in an earthquake or another catastrophic event.

You can find the NAIC Home Inventory App in the Apple App Store and on Google Play.



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