



Tip of the Month



August 2010

AFTER AN EARTHQUAKE

Recognizing Structural Damage

What to do INSIDE →

Earthquake forces can demonstrate a variety of motions such as jolts, side to side shaking, rolling, up and down movement etc.



Damage to your home or office is dependent upon the materials it is built with and the geology of your location.

1. Look in stairwells, basements, any other exposed areas to view the structural system.



2. Examine the vertical load-carrying system. Look for situations in which (1) a post may show signs of damage; (2) the floor or roof beams have begun to pull away from their supports; or (3) the slab or beam system has been damaged.



3. Examine the lateral load-carrying system. Any new offset such that the walls at any level are out-of-plumb with the wall below means some structural damage has been sustained. Look for situations in which a diagonal brace has buckled, bowed or cracked, or where walls have bowed or cracked.



4. Sheet rock and painted plywood walls show signs of distress if the nail heads show, generally at the edge of the wall. If just a few nail heads show, usually the strength of the wall has not decreased. However, if many nail heads show or the shank of the nail is visible, the strength of the wall has decreased significantly.



Did you miss it?
Last month we talked about what to look for
OUTSIDE