

# WHAT DO I NEED FOR A WORKPLACE CIVIL DEFENSE KIT?

In New Zealand, the **Health and Safety in Employment Act** considers that every work place should have a plan in case of emergency. The safety of employees is one of the primary obligations of a business owner.

Given that the people of **New Zealand can feel around 100 - 150 earthquakes a year**, it is obvious that every workplace should be prepared for this emergency situation. One of the most important things a workplace should have to be prepared is an **emergency civil defense kit**. Some of the items it should contain are:



**FOR WARMTH  
AND PROTECTION**



**FOR FIRST AID  
AND SANITATION**



**FOR RESCUE  
AND ENTRY**



**FOR  
COMMUNICATION**



**NEEDED TO CONTAIN  
FIRE AND SPILLS,  
FOOD AND WATER**

**AlSCO creates emergency kits** that are classified into modules that contain such items. All those modules are clearly marked and they are packed in a logical order in a cabinet, so you can find your way around them even in dark.

## What Is Needed in a Civil Defense Kit?

These modules from your **workplace civil defense emergency kit** are described in general. Now, let's go into a bit more detail and explain what really is in an emergency earthquake kit.

**Warmth and protection** - This should include foldable blankets, dust masks, gloves, and similar items that can help you stay warm and protect you. You need protection from the dust, debris and similar negative influences for your health and safety that are frequently found in a damaged building.



**First aid kit**- Your standard workplace first aid kit will do. However, it may not be reachable to you in case the building you are in is compromised. That is why a version of your first aid kit should be a part of your emergency kit contents, as well.



**Sanitation supplies** - First aid kits will always include some basic sanitation items, but they are enough only in case a wound needs to be sanitised. In case somebody is trapped in their workplace during an earthquake, or they need to remain there for a prolonged period of time, additional sanitation items are necessary. These include moist towels, garbage bags, plastic ties, water supplies and similar items.



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**Communication, rescue and entry items** - It is possible that an earthquake will compromise the electric grid in your workplace. It is necessary to turn off utilities and prevent further disaster. That is why you need wrench or pliers, but also protective gloves and even helmet. You will need a flashlight, battery-powered radio, phone and extra batteries to be able to communicate. It is also useful to have a whistle available.

**Food and drink** - In the worst case scenario, you will have to remain in the workplace for longer than a day. That is why a lot of workplace emergency kits are created to help you survive a period of 3 days. In this case, you need some non-perishable food and at least 3l of water per day, to help you with sanitation and of course, to keep you hydrated.



These are all items that need to be available in your workplace emergency kit. If an earthquake hits, it is best to stay inside. Given that you spend a lot of your time at your workplace, there is a good chance that you will be forced to stay there for a while.

## What Should You Do During Earthquake at Work?

In case you are inside your workplace when an earthquake happens **you need to stay inside**. Moreover, you should follow the **Drop, Cover and Hold protocol**. There are many people who rush outside in case of an earthquake, but that is a bit mistake. That is something you should be doing in case of fire.



**When an earthquake STRIKES, the authorities in New Zealand recommend you take the following three steps:**

**DROP** Get on the ground as soon as you realise that the earthquake is happening. If you are unable to drop to the ground, head to the walls, away from the glass windows and try holding onto a piece of sturdy furniture.

**COVER** Seek cover under the sturdiest piece of furniture in your vicinity. In case that mortar, light fixtures and other items start falling off the ceiling, you need to be covered.

**HOLD** Grab the sturdiest and the nearest piece of furniture and hold on to it. Don't let go until the shaking stops and even for a while after that.



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By analysing the injuries and outcomes of different actions taken during New Zealand earthquakes, it has been concluded that the **most of the injuries were sustained by people trying to exit** and those who managed to get outside.

Severe earthquakes cause parts of buildings, trees and even street lights to fall off and such objects can cause injuries. The same goes for the glass windows and even electric cords that can get torn. **Inside your workplace is safer**, even if the building has been compromised to a lesser degree.

## How to Prepare a Workplace Earthquake Emergency Plan?

When an earthquake happens, it is a bit too late for planning. Everything will be happening too fast and you need to plan ahead. As a business owner, you need to make sure that you have a **workplace emergency plan** already set and that all your employees are aware of it.

### You NEED to MAKE SURE that:

- Your employees know about the drop, cover and hold procedure
- Your employees know where the earthquake kits are
- Your employees have their go bags ready in case evacuation is necessary
- Your employees know about your established after earthquake procedure

The after earthquake procedure should be clearly understood and your employees should have their **personal workplace emergency plans**. Also, there should be an agreement about the correct course of actions and the leadership chain in case of earthquake.

These emergency plans will include the same idea, but they should also take into account the specifics of your workplace. For example, it should include the fact that nobody should use the elevators in case you run your business in a multi-storey building.

However, getting a well-supplied and regularly stocked earthquake kit is something every workplace needs. **Contact AlSCO New Zealand** and rent all the earthquake kits you need.

For a monthly price, you will always **be prepared for an emergency** and you'll never have to worry about the state of your kits, as we will check them, repair them and replenish them regularly.



The image shows a tweet from the account 'Get Ready Get Thru' (@NZGetThru). The tweet text reads: 'All of New Zealand is at risk of earthquakes, and lots of us travel to parts of the country where earthquakes are more common.' Below the text is a graphic with a blue background and yellow text that says: 'Drop, cover and hold is the right thing to do in an earthquake.' To the right of this text are three small illustrations: one showing a person dropping to the ground, one showing a person covering their head and neck, and one showing a person holding on to a fixed object. Below these illustrations are the words 'DROP', 'COVER', and 'HOLD' in yellow boxes. At the bottom of the graphic is the website 'www.civildefence.govt.nz' and the time '6:51 PM - 4 Dec 2016'.



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