



Fire prevention

Fire prevention during earthquakes

A frightening result of earthquakes is fire, which causes secondary destruction. Following the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake, major fires broke out across the city. Even during the Great East Japan Earthquake, which received a lot of attention for tsunami-related fires along the coast, 135 earthquake fires broke out across Tokyo and ten other prefectures. (Source: Fire and Disaster Management Agency, “Protecting Human Lives from Earthquake Fires”) To prevent earthquake fires from spreading across a wide area, every household must prevent fires from starting in their home. Even if a fire breaks out, you must extinguish it quickly (in its initial stages) and prevent it from spreading.



Three rules for initial-stage fire response

1

Call out loudly to notify others of the fire

- Yell, “Fire!” to get support from your neighbors.
- Call 119 to notify emergency services whenever there is a fire—no matter how small.

2

Take initial-stage firefighting measures

- Your best chance of extinguishing a fire is immediately after it starts. Remain calm and act quickly.
- Do not rely solely on fire extinguishers or water. Make full use of all items at hand (such as milk or cushions) to extinguish fires.

3

Escape quickly

- Basic firefighting becomes difficult when flames reach higher than your height.
- When you evacuate, close the doors and windows in the room to shut off the supply of air to the fire.
- Run through smoke quickly to avoid inhaling it.

When to fight fires in an earthquake

Generally, you have three chances to put out fires during an earthquake. Most houses are equipped with digital gas meters that automatically cut off the gas supply when they detect earthquake tremors. Make your own safety your top priority.



- When you hear an earthquake early warning, or an earthquake suddenly occurs



- After the large tremors subside



- Immediately after the fire starts

Preventing electrical fires

Watch out for electrical fires, which tend to occur when interrupted power is restored after an earthquake. Fallen electronic devices may set nearby objects on fire or ignite a gas leak when the power is restored. Remember these tips to prevent electrical fires.

- As a precaution, switch off all electrical devices after a large tremor.
- Switch off the circuit breaker when you evacuate.
- After an earthquake, double-check for gas leaks and damaged wires before using electronics.

