

Earthquake coverage not included in home or business insurance policies

Am I covered if an earthquake damages my home?

Unless you have purchased earthquake coverage, you are not covered by a standard homeowner's policy. So, structural damage to the home and any loss of furnishings and personal possessions would not be covered.



What about my business?

Again, unless you purchase earthquake coverage, you're not insured for structural damage, property loss or business interruption.

How does earthquake insurance work?

You can purchase an endorsement to a homeowners, renters or business policy or as a separate policy to cover your losses from earthquakes and aftershocks. Since different building materials react differently to earth movement (brick vs. wood, for example), premiums vary by the type of construction of the building.

Earthquake insurance deductibles are considerably higher than standard deductibles. Usually they are determined by a percentage of the building's value, generally from 5 percent to 40 percent.

Can I buy earthquake insurance at anytime?

The only time you can't buy the coverage for a home is within 72 hours after an earthquake, since there may be damaging aftershocks within that period of time. For a business owner's policy, an earthquake endorsement cannot be added within 168 hours.

With earthquake coverage, am I covered for aftershocks?

Yes. With a homeowner's earthquake endorsement, any damage from the earthquake and from aftershocks that happen within 72 hours of the earthquake will be considered one occurrence so you will pay your deductible only once. It works in a similar way for a business owner's earthquake endorsement. The earthquake and aftershocks within 168 hours are considered one occurrence.

I belong to a condo association. What if the common property is damaged?

If you belong to a townhouse or condominium association that has inadequate earthquake coverage or none at all, you could be charged for repairs to common property. If you have earthquake coverage and loss assessment coverage on your unit owner's policy, you may be able to extend it to cover you for this liability to the association. Please check with our agency for more information.

Do I really need earthquake coverage in this area of the country?

Small earthquakes have happened in this area and probably will happen again. In fact, some experts predict that within the next five years the Northeast will suffer a major quake. However, there's no way to be sure one way or the other of earth movement.

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