Purpose
- To minimize the amount of property damage caused by a seismic event

Benefits
- Reduce the potential for fatalities and injuries
- Prevent property loss and speed up recovery
- Maintain safe and clear exit ways for evacuation and access to home

Hazards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Wind</th>
<th>Rain</th>
<th>Flood</th>
<th>Seismic</th>
<th>Fire</th>
<th>Snow</th>
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Summary

In an earthquake, the actual movement of the ground is seldom the direct cause of death or injury. Most casualties result from objects sliding, breaking, falling, or tipping over. For example, during a seismic event, cabinet doors can open and spill their contents. Furthermore, the drawers, which sometimes have sharp edges, can slide out and cause harm to the home’s occupants. Therefore, securing the non-structural components (i.e., furnishings, equipment, cabinets, shelves, etc.) and building contents improves the safety and security of the home during an earthquake.

If items are not properly secured during an earthquake, all of your personal belongings are at risk of becoming disorganized or damaged. Significant damage can occur to valuable property and contents when they turn into projectiles. Installing self-locking kitchen drawers and cabinets or a locking mechanism, such as baby-proof latches, can prevent this from happening. Although these locks may seem a bit cumbersome at first, the small investment you spend on them can potentially save you from replacing hundreds of dollars worth of expensive kitchen dishes, glasses, and serving ware.

Installing self-locking latches to your cabinet doors and drawers is a simple “Do-It-Yourself” retrofit. The hardware for this retrofit will cost about $1 for a set of two latches.

Alternative: Provide child-proof closure

Install strong mechanical cabinet catches (safety hasp, slide bolt, touch-door cabinet catch, clip-roller or snap-action cabinet catch, etc.)

Install mechanical drawer closure (child-proof latches, drawer locks or other specialty latches)
Key Steps

- Attach mechanical or self-locking latches to prevent your cabinet doors from swinging open and spilling their contents. Your local hardware store should have a large variety of latches, many of which are small, unobtrusive, and fairly easy to operate.
- Your contractor may have additional ideas on how to improve the safety of your home.
- For more details about this retrofit improvement, please refer to the list of Resources in the section below.

Resources

FEMA, *Homebuilders’ Guide to Earthquake-Resistant Design and Construction*
http://www.fema.gov/library/viewRecord.do?id=2103


Insurance Institute for Business & Home Safety, *Securing Cabinets and Drawers*
http://www.disastersafety.org/project?projectId=4043