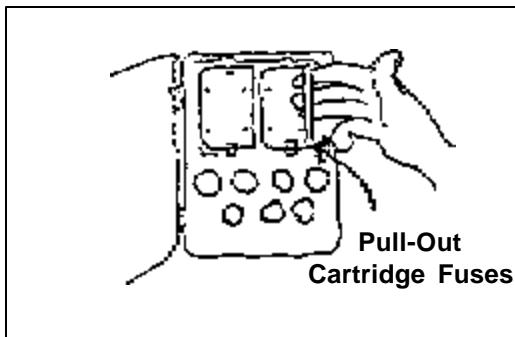


# Emergency Power Shut-Off

Prepared by the Peninsulas Emergency Preparedness Committee of Washington 11/00 ([www.pep-c.org](http://www.pep-c.org))

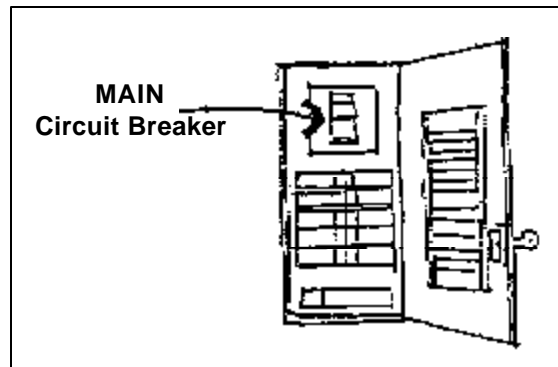
To be fully prepared for an emergency you should know how to shut off the power supply to your house. Immediately after an earthquake, or major disaster, do not turn lights on or off or use matches. Use flashlights and check for gas leaks. Sparks from lights or flames can cause an explosion or fire. If you have natural gas and hear or smell a gas leak, shut off the gas valve to your home and open doors and windows.

Locate your home's electrical circuit or fuse box. It is usually located outdoors in the rear or side of your house if it is not indoors in a hallway or closet. After an earthquake, if you hear sparking sounds, see or smell smoke, you should go to your electrical box and shut off your power.



Your house may be equipped with fuses or circuit breakers. If your house has fuses, you will find a knife switch handle or pull-out fuse that should be marked "MAIN."

If your house has circuit breakers, you may need to open the metal door of the breaker box to reveal the breakers (never remove the metal cover). The main circuit breaker should be clearly marked showing on and off positions. Turn off all the small breakers first, then turn off the "MAIN" (see diagram top right).



If you have any sub-panels adjacent to the main fuse, breaker panel, or in other parts of the house (in an emergency), be safe and shut them off too. Shorts can sometimes develop to cause a circuit to bypass the breaker or fuse.

Electrical power should also be shut off at the circuit or fuse box if there is damage to the wiring in your house. Damaged appliances should be disconnected. If you have a power outage, you should also turn off all the non-essential appliances and light fixtures in your home. Then turn on only one light to avoid an overload when your power is restored.

Check your home's outside electrical connections. Check the power lines around your home. If there is damage to the connection from the power pole to your house, you should go to the electrical box and turn off the main switch or shut off the fuse switch.

Finally, check for outdoor hazards, such as downed power lines. Beware of hidden hazards. Don't touch a chain link fence. There may be a power line down that is touching the fence somewhere beyond your sight. Determine whether the power is out only in your home or in the whole neighborhood. Report what you find to your local power company.