

## 12 Months of Preparedness

### Month 10. Shutting Off Gas & Water

During an earthquake the ground moves and shakes. So does your home. Everything flexes causing things like your windows breaking, things falling out of cabinets, and shelves tipping over (unless secured). Also flexing are the gas and water lines in the home. They could crack or break loose and cause a leak. If you smell the rotten egg odor of gas, you should vacate the premises right away. If can be done safely, you can shut off the gas at the gas meter and minimize the risk of fires or explosion. Note, however, that the gas should only be turned back on by a technician from the gas company. Obviously, if a water line broke within the home or property, you should shut it off at the street to minimize damage.

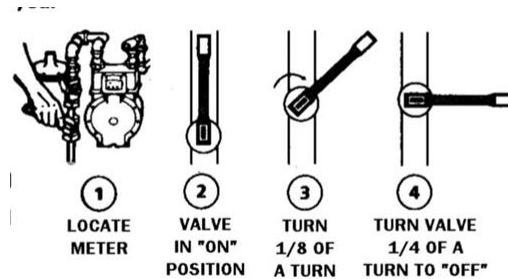
#### Gas:

Many preparedness experts say that you should shut off your gas after any significant earthquake. Even if you don't smell the gas, it could be leaking behind a wall or start leaking when there is an aftershock. You need to know where your gas meter is located.

Look for something like this:



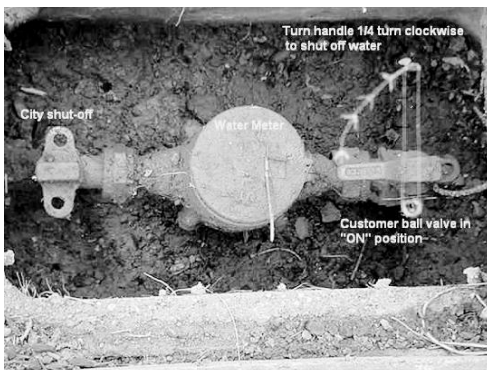
Using a gas shut off tool (readily available online or at hardware stores) or a wrench, turn the flat handle on the valve so it aligns across the direction of the pipe as shown in the drawing.



#### City Water:

Many newer homes have a system water valve within the home; usually on the garage wall. It looks like an outside faucet valve without the faucet part. Closing it shuts off all water to the house. If you don't have this valve, or cannot locate it, you can shut off the water to the property at the street or sidewalk.

Look for a covered box like this in your sidewalk or near the street:



Inside the box will be two valves on either end of a pressure regulator and probably some wires and a transmitter. Closing either valve will shut off water to your property. The valve closer to your property is a hand valve and can be turned by hand or with any tools to help. The other valve has a flat area to turn with a tool. Special long tools are available for reaching down into the box and turning the valves.