

Prepare...



Because  
You Care

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## Steps to Take - Strapping Your Water Heater

Typical water heaters weigh between 300 and 400 pounds when full. The sudden jolt and/or the rolling motion that accompanies most earthquakes can cause them to topple over. Strapping your water heater and making sure that it is fitted with a flexible gas supply greatly reduces the danger of fire or explosion from a gas leak after a disaster. Many water heaters that were inadequately strapped broke their strapping in both the 1989 Loma Prieta (San Francisco) and the 1994 Northridge (Los Angeles) earthquakes. The following instructions and diagram are provided to help you properly strap your water heater.

### Instructions

1. Create a snug fit between the tank and the wall to prevent the tank from tipping backward. If there is more than one to two inches of clearance, attach a wooden block (a 2 x 4 for example) to the wall studs with long lag screws.
2. Wrap either heavy-gauge steel or nylon strapping one and a half times around the tank. (Plumber's tape is not recommended. We have found that it is too lightweight to hold something as heavy as a water heater.) Start by placing the strapping at the back of the tank. Bring the tape to the front and then take it back to the wall. See the illustration on the back page.
3. Secure the strapping to the wall studs with several 1/4" x 3" lag screws with oversized washer. If you are using heavy-gauge steel strapping, the screw holes must be predrilled. (Screws easily penetrate nylon strapping.) Using oversized washers is important to keep the strapping secure.
4. Replace all rigid metal water and gas lines with flexible ones. **CAUTION:** Do not attempt this step unless you are qualified to work with gas and water lines.

*More information on other side -*

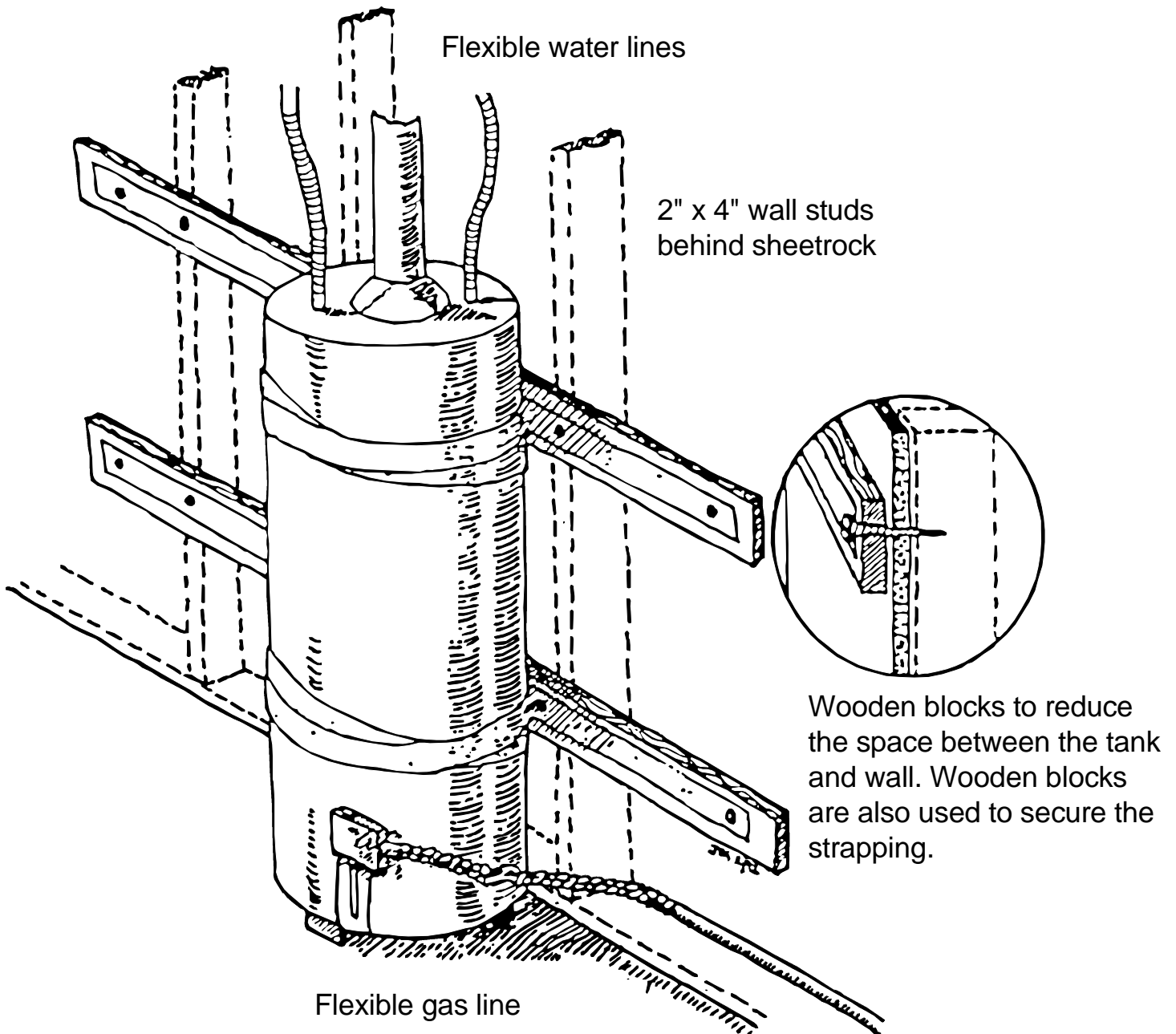
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*For more information, contact your  
local emergency management office  
list at right, or call the state's  
Emergency Management office  
(800) 562-6108*

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