

For people living in communal housing such as condominiums and apartments

## Disaster preparedness for condominiums

It is estimated that approximately 9 million people in Tokyo live in communal housing such as condominiums and apartments (hereinafter “condominiums”), and the number of high-rise condominiums with 20 floors or more is also increasing. This is where disaster preparedness specific to condominiums becomes important.

In condominiums and other communal housing, if sewage pipes, etc. have not been repaired, you may not be able to use the toilet, even if the water supply is working.

It will be difficult to move between ground level and the middle and upper floors of condominium buildings if the elevators stop working, making it difficult to shelter at home if you are not adequately prepared





Why is disaster preparedness for condominiums important in Tokyo?

## Understand disaster preparedness for condominiums

### It is possible to shelter at home if the damage is minor

The number of high-rise condominiums has increased by about 40% over the past 10 years. After a disaster, if the damage to your building is minor and there is no risk of it collapsing, you may be able to shelter in your home. On the other hand, the number of old condominium buildings that were built many years ago continues to increase. It is necessary to thoroughly check that there are no problems with its seismic resistance.



### Residents should work together on disaster preparedness

In a condominium, in addition to each household responding individually when a disaster occurs, disaster preparedness by the management association and entire building is effective. Therefore, it is effective to establish a voluntary disaster response team to prepare for disasters. Understand your building's strengths and weaknesses and build a cooperative system on a daily basis.



## Let's understand the strengths and weaknesses of condominiums!

### [Strengths of condominiums]

#### Seismic-resistant structure

Condominiums that meet seismic standards may develop cracks or suffer damage, but they will rarely collapse.

#### Utilization of common areas

A disaster response headquarters can be established and stockpiles can be temporarily stored. It is also a safe place for children to gather.

#### Helping each other

Discussing and acting together can be of great strength in an emergency.



### [Weaknesses of condominiums]

#### Elevators cannot be used

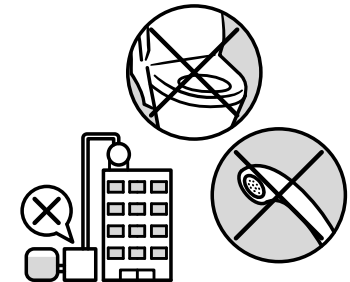
Elevators will not work if the power goes out. In some cases, people may get trapped inside. People living on higher floors and those with disabilities will have difficulty getting around.

#### Toilets cannot be used

Toilets cannot be used if sewage pipes are damaged. If a toilet on an upper floor is used in this scenario, sewage will overflow on a lower floor.

#### Common facilities cannot be used

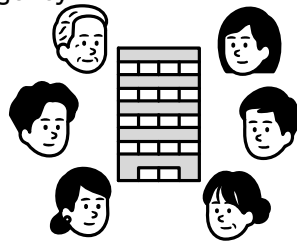
When the power goes out, common facilities such as lighting, mechanical parking lots, and automatic entrance locks become unusable, impacting daily life.



## How a condominium as a whole should prepare

### Decide the rules that will apply in an emergency

As preparation for a disaster, it is effective to establish in advance rules for checking building equipment, procedures for the emergency restoration of elevators and checking sewage pipes, and methods of disseminating information to residents. In addition, having face-to-face relationships with other residents through greeting and talking to each other on a daily basis will manifest in the ability to help each other in a disaster.



### Are there enough supplies and equipment in the emergency supplies storeroom?

Check whether the management association is also stockpiling important items such as drinking water and portable toilets. Don't store the stockpile in just one place (i.e. a emergency supplies storeroom), but place them on multiple floors in case the elevators stop working. Make sure the materials and equipment necessary for post-disaster recovery are also prepared.

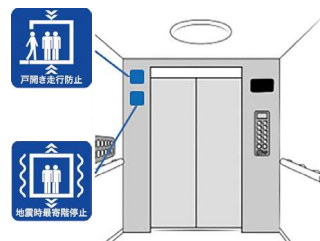


➡ p.65 of Disaster Preparedness Tokyo

### Check elevator safety measures

Install an emergency cabinet and stock it with water, food, portable toilets, etc. on the assumption that people may be trapped in the elevator for a long time. A blue label may be displayed inside the elevator to indicate that a safety device has been installed.

➡ p. 70 of Disaster Preparedness Tokyo



Source: Building Performance Standardization Association,  
<https://www.seinokyo.jp/evs/sm/>

## How prepared is your building?

### Condominium disaster preparedness checklist

- Disaster preparedness is sufficiently promoted through posters, etc.
  - I have regular face-to-face relationships with my neighbors.
  - The space for disaster response in case of an emergency has been decided
  - The management association also has sufficient stockpiles
  - Materials and equipment such as fire extinguishers, generators, and carts are prepared
  - As preparation for elevator outages, emergency supplies storerooms are placed on every few floors
  - A safety device is installed in the elevators
  - A disaster preparedness manual has been created and shared among residents
  - Disaster preparedness drills are held regularly
  - A voluntary disaster response team has been formed
  - A residents' list and a list of persons requiring consideration are maintained
- \*Please check with your management association if there is anything that is missing



Details can be found in the "Condominium Disaster Preparedness" section of the Disaster Preparedness Tokyo app. Please be sure to check it.

➡ See page 19 for download instructions



Understand the characteristics of condominiums and react calmly

## If you are in a condominium when a disaster occurs

### What will happen?

During a major earthquake, people, furniture, and appliances will fall over and stored items will be scattered. Additionally, if the elevators stop working, you may become trapped inside or have difficulty moving from higher floors. Keep in mind what to do when an earthquake hits and also what to do afterwards.



### Protect yourself and your family first

The shaking will be stronger on higher floors, so take steps to protect yourself from falling objects such as furniture that topples over and broken window glass. If you are trapped in an elevator, use the intercom button to call for assistance and wait for help.

### Let your neighbors know that you are safe and check on your neighbors

Once the situation has calmed down, hang a card confirming your safety on your front door to let people know that you are safe. If there are people on the same floor who require assistance, such as the elderly, infants or young children, knock on their door or say hello to make sure they are safe.



## Should you shelter at home or evacuate?

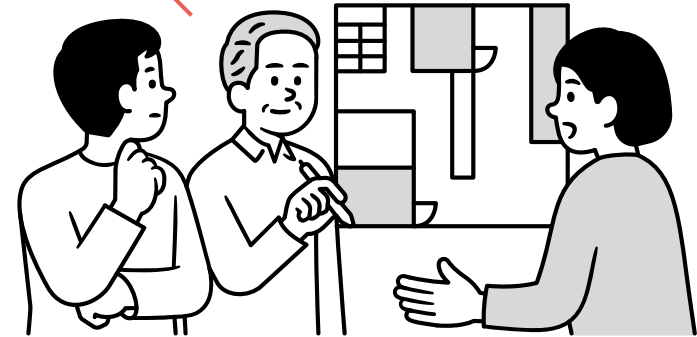
If the damage is minor, you may be able to shelter at home by staying in your apartment. If you feel uncertain about continuing to live there, go to an evacuation center. In addition, an evacuation site may be set up in the meeting room or other common area within the building.



## People sheltering at home should share the work and help each other

In a condominium complex where many people live, great power can be created if everyone cooperates. Help each other by sharing the tasks that you can do as residents, such as communicating with and transporting supplies to upper floors, and conducting crime prevention patrols. Communicate necessary information with each other, coordinate with the nearest evacuation center, and act together on behalf of the building when collecting relief supplies that are distributed to each building.

Creating a space for disaster response, such as for garbage collection and sorting relief supplies, will make things easier.



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