

# Shaking up quake safety

## San Marcos company sells adhesives and straps to keep property in place

By Lisa Marinelli

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SAN MARCOS -- Crashing furniture, flying televisions and shattering glass during an earthquake can spell disaster for a family or business.

A San Marcos company has spent the last 13 years working to improve safety in homes and offices with a line of adhesives, straps and other earthquake preparedness supplies.

"It only takes 10 seconds for you to lose everything you have," said Dran Reese, vice president of Trevco. "But if you've done some simple steps, you can worry about your children and yourself rather than your property."

While county residents have focused lately on fire safety, Reese and her husband, Dean Reese, president of Trevco, urge Californians to prepare homes and offices for earthquakes.

Scientists say several faults that run through the county have the potential to yield a quake as high as magnitude 7. The 1989 San Francisco quake registered at 7.1.

The last significant quake felt locally hit Riverside County on Oct. 31, 2001, and measured 5.1, said Frank Vernon, a research seismologist at Scripps Institution of Oceanography. That size quake is big enough to send objects to the ground, he said.

"We are safer than parts of San Francisco and Los Angeles, but that's a relative statement," Vernon said. "I don't think that you'll ever get anyone that says it's not wise to plan."

The genesis of Trevco was Dran Reese's search for a tacky substance to hold down collectibles after children, a cat and a quake damaged some valuables.

In 1991, the Reeses developed Quakehold!, a white, non-toxic, non-staining, removable putty that anchors objects to shelves.

The couple peddled their creation at county fairs, antique shows and home shows at first, targeting collectors. They founded Trevco in Monrovia a year later and moved to San Marcos in 1998 after outgrowing the original space.

The couple later created Marlyco Inc., as the parent company of Trevco.

The company, whose products are manufactured in this country and abroad, has grown to 10 employees, and annual sales this year of about \$4.5 million are predicted, the Reeses said. Its products are sold in more than 3,000 stores nationwide and are exported to Japan and the United Kingdom, where they are primarily used for preservation.

In its early years, Trevco focused on adhesives and developed "Museum Wax" used by collectors and museums to adhere wood and pottery to shelves. More recently, the company introduced a clear gel to anchor glass objects to glass shelves.

The adhesives sell for \$5 to \$10 a package and can be found at Home Depot, Lowe's, Ace Hardware and other retail stores. Customers can also order directly through the company.

Barry Pascal, owner of Northridge Pharmacy in Northridge, became a loyal Trevco client after the 1994 earthquake there. He said his customers weren't buying the Lladro, Waterford and Swarovski collectibles at the store because they feared they would lose them to another quake.

"So we started using Quakehold! to hold down all our glass and collectibles and things in showcases," Pascal said. "When someone would ask about an item like a Lladro, we would say if you buy it, we will give you some Quakehold! for free."

With the adhesive part of the business taking off, the Reeses turned to other aspects of earthquake safety. After becoming parents to Trevyn and Marly, whom their companies are named after, they realized it was critical to secure potentially deadly objects not only because of earthquakes but because of active children.

"It's the top-heavy cabinets, the mirrors, the TV flying across your living room that can hurt your children," Dean Reese said.

Trevco's peel-and-stick, flexible nylon furniture straps for china cabinets, bookshelves, entertainment centers and other furniture can hold 399 pounds each. The two-strap packages, which sell for about \$10, offer various colors to match wood.

Trevco also sells straps for water heaters and file cabinets, fasteners for televisions, computers and picture frames, and chemical light sticks for when the power goes out.

A University of California San Diego study four years ago proved the value of securing potentially hazardous objects. Researchers simulated a 15-second quake on a two-story house built on a shake table. An unsecured water heater fell over while two that were secured remained standing. Anchored bookcases stayed put, but an unsecured file cabinet crashed over.

"There are two aspects -- personal safety and the other aspect is protection of your property," said Scott Ashford, associate professor of structural engineering at UCSD's Jacobs School of Engineering.

"If you look at damage done after an earthquake, even if the building is not damaged, the contents can be damaged. You could face financial damage loss and a lot of time to recover after an earthquake."

For more information on the company, log onto [www.earthquakeinfo.com](http://www.earthquakeinfo.com).

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