



# SISC BULLETIN

SELF-INSURED SCHOOLS of CALIFORNIA

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October 25, 2004

TO: District Superintendents  
SISC II Member Districts

FROM: Catherine Wilson Jones  
Director, Risk Management Services

SUBJECT: Duck and Cover

When the earth shakes, Duck, Cover, and Hold is still the standard. There has been significant controversy recently regarding Duck and Cover versus a new theory called Triangle of Life. Basically, the Triangle of Life concept operates on the premise that it is better to be adjacent to a large object rather than underneath (as in the duck and cover method). This concept theorizes that when overhead components collapse, there are pockets created when they fall onto objects below. By being adjacent to an object, an individual may survive the collapse by taking advantage of the pockets, or “triangles of life”.

Although the concept is provocative, the theory has been debunked by the experts. The construction standards in California, particularly school construction, are very strict which means that building collapses are rare. In fact, most injuries in California earthquakes occur when building occupants attempt to exit buildings or move to a different location in the building. The California Office of Emergency Services, The California Seismic Safety Commission, and the American Red Cross all support the continued use of the duck and cover method.

So the bottom line is, when the earth moves—Duck, Cover, and Hold!

CWJ:sh

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