

Strapping Your Water Heater

1 Strapping your water heater and making sure it is fitted with flexible gas and water supply line will greatly reduce the danger of a fire or explosion from a gas leak after an earthquake. If your water heater does not have a flexible gas and water supply line, contact a licensed plumber to install them.

2 Mark the water heater at a point 6 inches down from the top and about 18 inches up from the bottom. Transfer these marks to the wall. Locate the studs in the wall on both sides of the water heater.

(If your water heater is more than 1 or 2 inches away from the wall, install wood blocking (1x4 or 2x4 lumber) to the wall studs with 4 or 5 inch (respectively) lag screws and washers. Secure nylon strapping to wood blocking with 3 inch lag screws and oversized washers.)

3 Drill a 3/16 inch hole 3 inches deep through the wall sheathing and into the center of the wood studs at the four marks made in step 2.

4 Measure around the water heater and over to holes on each side. This is how much nylon strapping you'll need for each strap.

(If you're strapping to wood blocking you'll need a few more inches on each side so that you can secure the nylon strap with 2 screws and oversized washers.)

5 Begin at the back of the water heater and wrap the strap around to the front of the heater and then take it back to the wall.

6 Adjust the strap to the proper height and tighten snugly, but not too tight. Secure to wood blocking or wall studs with appropriate sized lag screw and washer.

(Strapped snugly, the nylon strapping should naturally be flexible enough to give a little with the motion caused by an earthquake but still strong enough to keep your water heater from tipping over.)