



Press Release

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IEMA Encourages People to Prepare for Earthquakes

Preparedness actions can prevent injuries, reduce property damage

SPRINGFIELD – In recognition of the earthquake risk posed by the New Madrid and Wabash Valley seismic zones, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) and local emergency management agencies are promoting earthquake preparedness throughout the month of February.

“While some hazards such as storms, tornadoes and floods can be forecasted in order to provide advance notice to residents in an area of danger, other hazards such as earthquakes cannot be predicted,” said IEMA Director Alicia Tate-Nadeau. “Earthquakes can happen anywhere and at any time, including while you are at work, at home or on vacation. Creating an environment of education, awareness and preparedness can save lives.”

The United States Geological Survey (USGS) estimates that 500,000 detectable earthquakes occur in the world each year. Illinois has experienced at least [13 earthquakes](#) since [September 2017](#) when the southeastern part of our state was rocked by a 3.8 magnitude tremor.

Two hundred years ago, the Central United States was sparsely populated when an 8.0 magnitude earthquake shook the region. A similar earthquake today would have a devastating impact on the millions of people who live in the Midwest.

The actual movement of the ground during an earthquake is seldom a direct cause of death or injury. Most injuries and casualties result from falling objects and debris. Learning how to “**Drop, Cover and Hold On**” can help people prevent injury during an earthquake. The phrase reminds people to drop down to the floor, take cover under a sturdy desk, table or other furniture, and hold on to that object until the shaking ends.

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February also begins the agency's initiative to register homes, businesses, schools and organizations in the world's largest earthquake drill. This year's earthquake drill will take place on **Thursday, October 21 at 10:21 a.m.** It's never too early to register your participation in this potentially life-saving event. Register today at www.shakeout.org.

To reinforce earthquake preparedness, the Illinois Emergency Management Agency has put together a [series videos](#) with step by step instructions for Do-It-Yourself mitigation projects to better prepare your household for an earthquake.

Learn more about preparing your home, business and family for an earthquake at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.

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