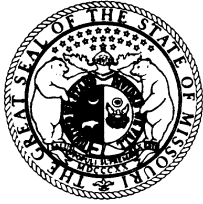


EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

PO Box 116, Jefferson City, Missouri 65102
Phone: 573/526-9100 Fax: 573/634-7966
E-mail: mosema@sema.dps.mo.gov



Contact: Earthquake Program Manager Steve Besemer, (573) 526-9232
Steve.besemer@SEMA.dps.mo.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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One week left to register and participate with more than 417,000 others in Missouri's largest earthquake drill

Eleven state "Great Central U.S. ShakeOut" is at 10:15 a.m. April 28

JEFFERSON CITY – The largest earthquake drill ever conducted in Missouri is just one week away, but there is still time for school districts, businesses and families to register and take part in the "Great Central U.S. ShakeOut" on Thursday, April 28.

In Missouri, more than 311,000 students and staff at more than 345 school districts and individual schools are among the more than 417,000 people registered to take part in the drill at 10:15 a.m. Registering for the drill takes just a few minutes, as does the drill itself.

"I am very encouraged to see so many Missourians, particularly schools, registered and ready to participate and learn more about earthquakes and earthquake safety," said **Missouri State Emergency Management Agency Director Paul Parmenter**. "Unlike other disasters, an earthquake occurs without warning, so it's vital to know what to do in advance. The ShakeOut drill is a great way to learn how to protect yourself and your family, and it only takes a minute."

Anyone can register for the ShakeOut at www.shakeout.org/centralus, where you'll receive all the information you need for a successful drill.

During the ShakeOut, participants will "Drop, Cover and Hold On" for 60 seconds. Experts say this is the best way to protect yourself during an earthquake, since in the U.S. the primary threat for injury or loss of life is falling debris and toppling objects, like bookcases and heavy electronics, not a structural collapse.

At 10:15 a.m. on April 28, Missourians and people around the central U.S. will:

- **DROP** to the ground



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- take **COVER** by getting under a sturdy desk or table
- **HOLD ON** to it until the shaking stops

Much more earthquake preparedness information is available on the State Emergency Management Agency's Earthquake Preparedness page. Go to www.sema.dps.mo.gov and click on "Missouri Earthquake Preparedness 2011" in the blue box, or go directly to http://sema.dps.mo.gov/earthquake_preparedness_2011.

On Tuesday, U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan and Department of Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano sent out a joint letter encouraging educators to register their schools to participate in the ShakeOut. Here is a link to their letter: <http://www.dhs.gov/xlibrary/assets/s1-shakeout-letter-04182011.pdf>

The **New Madrid Seismic Zone**, centered in southeast Missouri, is the nation's most active earthquake zone east of the Rocky Mountains. At least three of the largest earthquakes in the continental United States occurred in the region from 1811-12. The largest of the quakes was centered in New Madrid and occurred on Feb. 7, 1812. The earthquakes altered the flow of the Mississippi River, turned rich farmland into fields of sand and destroyed countless structures.

The earthquakes were felt all the way to the east coast, and were followed by aftershocks that continued for more than two years. More than 2,000 shocks were felt at least 180 miles away from their epicenters.