

NEWS

From the Springfield Fire Department



February 3, 2012

BE PREPARED FOR EARTHQUAKES

While severe earthquakes don't happen very often in Illinois, the potential for severe earthquakes is very real here. That's why the Springfield Fire Department wants to encourage everyone to do what over two million people are planning on doing- **take part in The Great Central U.S. ShakeOut**. The monthly test of the emergency warning siren system in Springfield, Illinois is held at 10:00 a.m. on the 1st Tuesday of every month. This month it will be **Tuesday, February 7, 2012 at 10:00 a.m.**

Here are a few tips to help you to be ready for earthquakes.

- **Practice Drop, Cover, and Hold On.** **Drop** to the ground, take **Cover** under a table or desk, and **Hold On** to it as if a major earthquake were happening (stay down for at least 60 seconds). In recent years other methods have been promoted- even some rescuers have promoted other methods. But statistics show that the majority of injuries occur from falling debris, not building collapse.
- **Don't try to run to another room or location.** When a severe earthquake strikes, severe damage and falling objects can happen quickly. Protect yourself using the Drop, Cover, and Hold On technique immediately. If you can't get under something sturdy for protection, sit on the floor near an interior wall and cover your head and neck with your arms.
- **Use your imagination.** Stay protected and imagine that the shaking has stopped. Look around and imagine what has fallen and how it could have hurt you. Could shelves, mirrors or other items have fallen? Are there suspended ceilings and lights that might have fallen?
- **Check to see that everyone is safe.** Imagine that others are in your home or building. Where might they be? What may have fallen where they are at? If anyone would need first aid, can we get to our kit?
- **Know two ways out.** It's important to stay protected until the shaking stops. However, after an earthquake it may be necessary to go outside. Know two ways out of your area in case one of them is blocked. Also, identify two areas where you will meet others. One area should be near the home or building, and the other area should be away from homes or buildings if possible.

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--- Earthquake Preparedness, Add 2

- **Check for damage.** Shaking a home or building can cause damage to electrical wires and to gas and water lines. The result may be fires or dangerous situations that may not be noticed immediately. It's important to know how to shut off utilities and how and when to use a fire extinguisher.
- **Consider what could happen next.** More tremors or earthquakes could occur. Being prepared also includes making sure you have sufficient emergency supplies and that they are ready in kits that you can take with you in case you need to evacuate the area.

Go to www.shakeout.org/centralus to register your participation in **The Great Central U.S. ShakeOut**. For more tips on earthquake and disaster preparedness you can also visit <http://ready.illinois.gov>

Join the Springfield Fire Department in preparing for earthquakes and let's stay safe together.

Fire Chief Ken Fustin
Springfield Fire Department

Fire Marshall Rick Weber
Fire Safety Division

Captain Jim Price
Public Education Officer