

Illinois to Participate in National Earthquake Drill in October

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Millions of People in 37 States Expected to 'Drop, Cover and Hold On' During Great U.S. ShakeOut on Oct. 17

SPRINGFIELD – At 10:17 a.m. on Oct. 17, millions of people in 37 states, the District of Columbia and portions of several countries are expected to 'Drop, Cover and Hold On' as they participate in the Great U.S. ShakeOut earthquake drill. The event will mark the first time states across the U.S. will join together in the drill designed to raise awareness about earthquake risks and the ways people can stay safe when the ground starts shaking.

Illinois has participated in ShakeOut drills for the past three years as part of the Great Central U.S. ShakeOut. In Feb. 2013, more than 570,000 people in Illinois registered for the Great Central U.S. ShakeOut, which also included the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma and Tennessee. To date, more than 186,000 people in Illinois are registered for the October drill.

"We're excited to be part of the national effort to raise awareness of earthquake safety," said IEMA Director Jonathon Monken. "The drill takes just a few minutes, but the lessons learned could save countless lives."

Monken noted that the most powerful earthquakes to ever occur in the U.S. happened a little more than 200 years ago in the New Madrid Seismic Zone, which reaches into southern Illinois. That series of earthquakes lasted for several months and shaking was felt as far away as the East Coast.

Schools, businesses, government agencies, families and others are encouraged to register to participate in the drill at www.shakeout.org/centralus. Registered participants will receive additional information about the drill and earthquake preparedness. While the multi-state drill will take place on Oct. 17, individual drills can be conducted anytime within two weeks of that date.

The drill focuses on the "Drop, Cover and Hold On" protective actions people should take when an earthquake begins: "Drop" down to the floor, take "Cover" under a sturdy desk, table or other furniture, and "Hold On" to the furniture item and be prepared to move with it until the shaking stops.

Additional information about the earthquake risk in Illinois and steps to take before, during and after an earthquake is available at www.Ready.Illinois.gov.