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In Earthquakes: Drop, Cover and Hold On *Southeast Schedules First-Ever Earthquake Drill*

RALEIGH – One year after a 5.8 magnitude earthquake near Mineral, Va. sent shockwaves across the Tar Heel state, North Carolina Emergency Management officials are encouraging residents to participate in the first-ever earthquake exercise for the southeast region. The Southeast Shakeout is scheduled for Oct. 18 at 10:18 a.m.

“While earthquakes in North Carolina are rare, they do happen,” explained state Emergency Management Director Doug Hoell. “Even earthquakes in other areas can send shockwaves across our state as we experienced last year. We want to be sure people know what to do to protect themselves.”

Hoell said everyone should be prepared to drop, cover and hold on if they are ever in a situation where they feel the ground moving and shaking. Although ground shaking from earthquakes typically lasts only a minute or two, aftershocks can continue for several days or even weeks.

Federal, state and local emergency management experts and rescue teams agree that the best actions to keep you safe in an earthquake are:

- **Drop to the ground** (before the earthquake makes you fall)
- **Take cover** under a sturdy desk or table
- **Hold on** to the desk until the shaking stops.
- If there is no table or desk nearby, crouch in an inside corner of a building and cover your head and neck with your hands and arms.
- Stay away from bookshelves, lamps, TVs, cabinets and other objects as much as possible. Such items may fall and cause injuries.

Just as importantly, Hoell said, there are several actions that people should not do.

- **DO NOT** get in a doorway. They are not safe and do not protect you from falling or flying objects.
- **DO NOT** run outside. Running in an earthquake is dangerous. The ground is moving making it easy to fall or be injured by falling structures, trees, debris or glass.

Emergency officials from North Carolina, Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia have joined

together to host the first-ever earthquake drill in the southeast. Residents, businesses and schools are encouraged to take part in the quick earthquake drill.

Similar to the annual tornado drill held each spring, people will be asked to take a few minutes of their day to rehearse what they would do in such an emergency. Since earthquakes happen with no warning, there will be no Emergency Alert System test to announce the drill. Instead, each school, business, agency and family is asked to practice recommended safety techniques on their own.

Additional information and resource guides are available on www.shakeout.org/southeast to help various groups prepare for the exercise. Individuals and agencies can register their participation on the website.

“We encourage everyone to take a couple of minutes out of their day to rehearse the potential life-saving actions,” said Hoell.

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Recent Earthquakes Impacting North Carolina

Aug. 21, 2012	Small 2.2 magnitude quake in Madison County
June 19, 2012	Small 2.0 earthquake in Macon County; some residents reported feeling ground shake
May 31, 2012	Small 1.7 earthquake in Macon County
March 31, 2012	Small 2.2 earthquake in Union County; some residents reported feeling ground shake
Aug. 23, 2011	A 5.8 magnitude quake near Mineral, Va. Was the largest earthquake to strike the eastern U.S. since 1944. The earthquake was felt from Canada to Georgia. Two nearby schools had structural damage. Even the National Cathedral and Washington Monument sustained some damages.

Other Earthquake Facts

- Largest earthquake centered in North Carolina struck Feb. 21, 1916 as a 5.5 magnitude quake in the western part of the state that caused cracks in buildings in Asheville and Waynesville.
- Since 1735, 22 earthquakes have caused damage in North Carolina; only seven were located in the state. Four of those quakes were strong enough to cause structural damage: a 5.1 quake in Wilkesboro in 1861; a 7.3 quake in Charleston in 1886; a 5.5 quake in Asheville in 1916; and a 5.2 quake in Mitchell County in 1926.
- Four earthquake zones could generate ground shaking strong enough to cause damage in North Carolina: 1) Eastern Tennessee Seismic Zone, 2) Southern Appalachian Seismic Zone; 3) Charleston, S.C. Seismic Zone; and 4) Giles County, Va. Seismic Zone.