

State of California  
Seismic Safety Commission

Memo

To: Commissioners

From: Seismic Safety Commission  
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Subject: Great California ShakeOut Earthquake Drill: Awareness to Action

On October 20, 2011, the Great ShakeOut earthquake drill originated in California was also held in Nevada, Guam, Oregon, Idaho and British Columbia. Over 9.5 million people participated in the drill, including over 8.6 million Californians - practicing how to protect themselves during earthquakes (Drop, Cover, and Hold On), and encouraged to prepare to survive and recover at work, school, and home. California's registration for the 2012 ShakeOut drill is already more than 7 million and counting!

The ShakeOut began in southern California in 2008, as a way of involving the general public in a large-scale emergency management exercise based on a magnitude 7.8 earthquake on the San Andreas fault (the ShakeOut Scenario developed by a team of experts led by Dr. Lucy Jones of the U.S. Geological Survey). The goal was to promote preparedness actions by communicating scientific information and awareness in such a manner that encouraged the whole community to get prepared and to participate in the largest earthquake drill in U.S. history. The Earthquake Country Alliance (headquartered at SCEC with members from California science, preparedness, and community organizations) coordinated outreach and recruitment. More than 5.4 million people participated in 2008, with schools for the first time coordinating earthquake drills on the same day.

Soon after the first ShakeOut drill, participant demand convinced organizers to develop the ShakeOut into a statewide, annual event each October. K-12 and college students and staff comprise the largest number of participants, but the ShakeOut also has been successful at recruiting participation by businesses,

non-profit organizations, government offices, neighborhoods, and individuals. Each year participants are encouraged to incorporate additional elements of their emergency plans into their ShakeOut drill. California's Earthquake Country Alliance coordinates stakeholders from across sectors and across the state, including CalEMA, California Earthquake Authority, FEMA, American Red Cross, and others who continue to provide strong monetary and in-kind support.

Because of the success of the ShakeOut in California, several other regions ([www.ShakeOut.org](http://www.ShakeOut.org)) have created ShakeOut drills, with websites managed by SCEC. In addition to the areas listed above, the Central U.S. has held ShakeOut drills in 2011 and 2012, the first Tokyo Shakeout was held on March 9, 2012 (and has led to other drills throughout Japan), Utah held its first ShakeOut on April 17, 2012, and New Zealand is planning a nationwide ShakeOut in September, 2012, which already has exceeded their goal of 1 million participants. In October 2012 the west coast ShakeOut drills listed above will be joined by Washington State, Alaska, and Arizona, as well as Puerto Rico, a regional drill in the Southeast U.S., and a U.S. Naval facility drill in Southern Italy. Hawaii, Montana, the Northeast, and several countries (Turkey, Chile, China, and more) may join in coming years. In total over 15 million participants are expected in 2012 worldwide.