



2012 Great California ShakeOut History and Overview

2012 is the fourth year (statewide) of The Great California ShakeOut, a drill designed to educate the public about how to protect themselves during a large earthquake, and how to get prepared. It will be the largest earthquake drill to ever take place in the United States.

2008

The first ShakeOut was held in 2008 as the Great Southern California ShakeOut, an effort by scientists and emergency managers to inform the public about earthquake preparedness. It was based on the ShakeOut Scenario, a comprehensive description of a magnitude 7.8 earthquake on the San Andreas Fault in southern California and the destruction it would cause, which was developed by the USGS Multi-Hazards Demonstration Project led by Dr. Lucy Jones. The scenario was planned to be used as the basis of California's 2008 "Golden Guardian" response exercise.

In Fall, 2007, leaders of the Earthquake Country Alliance began discussion of how to involve all residents of southern California in the exercise, and planning for the ShakeOut began. The first ShakeOut on November 13, 2008, was the largest earthquake drill in U.S. history at the time with a total of 5.4 million participants spanning eight counties in the southern part of the state, who practiced Drop, Cover, and Hold On and other aspects of family, school, and workplace emergency plans.

In California, ShakeOut is coordinated by the Earthquake Country Alliance, and the ShakeOut website is developed and maintained by the Southern California Earthquake Center, based at the University of Southern California.

2009

For its second year the Great California ShakeOut expanded to the entire state- all 58 counties, divided into 11 areas. Because the ShakeOut Scenario was only applicable for southern California, the statewide encouraged participants to plan drills for potential earthquakes in their region, or for large earthquakes in general. More than 6.9 million Californians participated on October 15th at 10:15 a.m.

Also in 2009, the New Zealand's Great West Coast ShakeOut was held, the first test of the ShakeOut concept in another region. SCEC replicated the website in partnership with a local school administrator working on a year-long earthquake preparedness project sponsored by New Zealand's Ministry of Civil Defense and Emergency Management. More than 8,000 people participated, out of a mostly rural population of about 30,000. Discussions are underway for a possible nationwide New Zealand ShakeOut.

Subsequently, SCEC has continued to work with all other ShakeOuts so that the websites, messaging, and materials are consistent and collaborative. Each new ShakeOut has brought new ideas that are then integrated with all others.



2012 Great California ShakeOut History and Overview

2010

For its third year, the California ShakeOut was held on October 21st at 10:21 am and grew to more than 7.9 million participants. Participants were also encouraged to Secure their Space to prevent injuries and damage caused by earthquakes.

In addition to the California ShakeOut, Nevada (110,000 participants, managed by the Nevada Seismological Laboratory) and Guam (38,000 participants, coordinated by Guam Homeland Security) joined in the Shakeout with drills also on October 21.

2011

2011 was the first year of the British Columbia ShakeOut, the largest earthquake drill to ever take place in Canada (470,000 participants), coordinated by the British Columbia Earthquake Alliance. The drill was held on January 26, the anniversary of a 9.0 magnitude earthquake in the Cascadia subduction zone (off the coast of northern California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia.) As an initial test, the first Oregon ShakeOut was coordinated by Oregon Emergency Management (38,000 participants, with outreach focused primarily in one county).

A few months later, the first Central United States ShakeOut (3 million participants) involved ten states on April 28th, preceded by Indiana on April 19th. The multi-state drill was coordinated by the Central United States Earthquake Consortium as part of the bicentennial of large earthquakes centered near New Madrid, Missouri in 1811-1812.

After the first British Columbia ShakeOut drill in early 2011, its leaders consulted with School Districts, the Ministry of Education, and emergency management stakeholders from across the province and decided to align the Great BC ShakeOut with Shakeout drills in western North America in October, on an annual basis beginning in 2011 (their second ShakeOut in 2011). The Yukon Territory of Canada will also participate in future BC ShakeOut drills. Oregon also has decided to switch to the October date in 2011, though major promotion will begin in 2012.

The first Idaho ShakeOut, coordinated by Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, was also held in October 2011.

As a result, on October 20, 2011, at 10:20 a.m., ShakeOut drills were held in California (with Yuma County, Arizona), Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, British Columbia, and Guam. More than 9.5 million people participated in all regions. Future drills in these areas will always be on third Thursday of October.

2012 and beyond

The second Central United States ShakeOut was held on February 7th, to commemorate the bicentennial of the 1812 New Madrid earthquake. The drill spanned nine states with 2.4 million participants (Georgia and South Carolina chose not to participate with the Central U.S. but instead may develop a "Southeast ShakeOut").

The first Japanese ShakeOut, in the Chiyoda ward of central Tokyo, occurred on March 9, two days prior to the anniversary of the 2011 Tohoku earthquake and tsunami. Additional drills will be held elsewhere in Japan throughout Fall 2012 and may join together on a single day in the future.

The first Utah Shakeout was held on April 17, 2012, and had the highest level (per capita) of any ShakeOut.

The first nationwide New Zealand Shakeout was held on September 26, 2012 and greatly exceeded expectations.

The California, Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, Guam, and British Columbia drills will be on October 18th at 10:18 a.m. (locally) in 2012, and will be joined for the first time by Alaska, Arizona, Puerto Rico, Southeast U.S. (Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Washington D.C., and Maryland), Washington, and Southern Italy (led by U.S. Navy Bases).

A new "global" website was established for the October 18th 2012 ShakeOut to allow people in any other state or country to register and be counted in the global total. This site is also the basis on a global Spanish language site for people in all states and countries (including in Official ShakeOut Regions) to learn how to participate and register. Additional languages will follow.

In total more than 13 million people will participate on October 18th, and more than 18 million will participate in 2012.

Additional areas considering ShakeOut drills are American Samoa, Hawaii, Mexico, Turkey, and elsewhere.