



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**More than 6 million Californians already have signed up for the Great California ShakeOut earthquake drill, at 10:15 a.m. on 10/15**

September is National Preparedness Month, and in California it is followed with an earthquake drill in October to test our readiness — it's called the Great California ShakeOut. The purpose of the ShakeOut is to practice how to protect ourselves during earthquakes, and to get prepared at work, school and home.

The Samoan earthquake and tsunami on 9/29 and the Indonesian earthquake on 9/30 remind us that earthquakes happen without warning, and can cause widespread destruction. A major goal of disaster preparedness experts in California is to develop a culture of earthquake and tsunami readiness, so that losses will be minimized and we can recover quickly. What each of us does in our homes, schools, and offices, and what we do together as communities and as a state, will determine whether California's next major earthquake will be a natural disaster (from which we can recover quickly), or a major catastrophe that will affect our way of life for many years.

Matthew Bettenhausen, California Emergency Management Agency's Acting Secretary, asks Californians to "act now to secure contents in your home or office so they won't fall, organize your emergency supplies, and update your family emergency plan. Then on October 15 practice 'drop, cover and hold on.'"

Today the Humboldt County Board of Supervisors issued a proclamation urging "the participation of all Humboldt County residents, businesses and other organizations in the Great California ShakeOut on October 15, 2009."

Individuals, families, schools, businesses, government agencies and organizations can register for the Great California ShakeOut at [www.shakeout.org](http://www.shakeout.org). The ShakeOut website also has "ShakeOut Drill Broadcast" recordings to play during the drill, updated drill manuals for schools, businesses, non-profits and other organizations, checklists, take-home materials, and educational curricula.

"Drop, cover and hold on" is the recommended procedure in an earthquake. People should quickly get under a heavy table or desk to avoid being hit by falling objects — or get on the ground next to an interior wall and cover their head and neck with their arms. People can learn what to do, no matter where they are when the earthquake strikes at [www.dropcoverholdon.org](http://www.dropcoverholdon.org). Regional information for Northern California, such as details about earthquake and tsunami hazards, is available at <http://www.humboldt.edu/shakyground/>.

The Great California ShakeOut is about more than just practicing "drop, cover, hold on." It's about getting all of us to talk about earthquakes, think about preparedness, and to act now. HSU's Prof. Lori Dengler notes that of all the California counties that were affected by the

Tsunami Advisory issued as a consequence of the September 29 Samoa earthquake and tsunami, only Humboldt and Del Norte Counties' emergency response was appropriate.

Local disaster preparedness experts, including leaders from the Humboldt Earthquake Education Center and the Redwood Coast Tsunami Work Group are urging Northern Californians to participate in the ShakeOut, and use it as a part of their earthquake and tsunami disaster preparedness efforts.

With less than two weeks until the 2009 ShakeOut, more than 6 million people — in businesses, government offices, neighborhoods, schools, and as individuals — have been registered at [www.ShakeOut.org](http://www.ShakeOut.org). Close to 20,000 people in Humboldt County have signed-up. Last year 5.4 million people participate in the Great Southern California ShakeOut. The drill is now statewide, and will be an annual opportunity to improve preparedness and practice protective actions.

In upcoming weeks folks in Northern California will receive copies of *Living on Shaky Ground: How to Survive Earthquakes and Tsunamis in Northern California* in general circulation newspapers from Mendocino County north to Oregon and east to Nevada. This 32-page, full-color publication discusses the latest information on our earthquake and tsunami hazards, and then presents a sensible seven-step plan on what to do before, during and after earthquakes or tsunamis to mitigate hazards, reduce injuries and save lives.