



## Franklin County Emergency Management Agency

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## Media Release

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## April is Earthquake Preparedness Month in Illinois; Franklin County Launches Community Earthquake Preparedness Campaign

*Emergency management officials in Franklin County launch community preparedness initiatives geared toward community preparedness and earthquake safety*

(Benton, Illinois) – If an earthquake were to happen right now, are you prepared? Southern Illinois is located between the New Madrid and Wabash Valley fault zones, making the area very vulnerable to a major quake. "As we have seen with the recent events in Japan, a catastrophic earthquake can happen at any time" said Director Ryan M. Buckingham. Franklin County Emergency Management Agency (FCEMA) in conjunction with the Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) will highlight earthquake preparedness throughout the state in April for the Illinois annual earthquake preparedness month.

Events throughout April, such as the Great Central U.S. ShakeOut will serve as a reminder for everyone to practice their earthquake preparedness plan. It is important to know how to protect yourself during an earthquake. The Great Central U.S. ShakeOut will give everyone the opportunity to practice what to do during an earthquake with friends and family to be prepared for when the shaking starts. "If things start shaking, remember these three steps; Drop, Cover, and Hold on", said Buckingham. "If you're inside of a vehicle, stay inside below window level until the shaking stops. Do not leave the safety of your vehicle until you are sure it is completely safe to do so." More than 1.6 million people in 11 states currently are registered to participate in the ShakeOut drill, which will begin at 10:15 a.m. on April 28th. You can register to participate in the ShakeOut at [www.ShakeOut.org/centralus](http://www.ShakeOut.org/centralus).

FCEMA's Bureau of Emergency Preparedness will be launching a new earthquake preparedness program this month. The program includes community speaking engagements, presentations, and a new program designed to reach out and teach children how to prepare for emergencies. The new program for kids features Ready Rex, the last known surviving dinosaur in Franklin County. Ready Rex survived extinction because he had a plan and was prepared. "I was prepared, had a plan, and knew what to do when an emergency happened, that's how I survived and so can you!" said Ready Rex.

FCEMA in conjunction with Benton Public Library would like to invite you to meet Ready Rex and join in on a Town Hall Meeting to discuss earthquake preparedness. The presentation and meeting will take place on April 20<sup>th</sup>, at 6:00 PM at the Benton Public Library. Emergency management officials will introduce Ready Rex and will host a presentation and discussion on earthquakes in Illinois. For more information on earthquake preparedness visit the agency's website at [www.franklincountyema.com](http://www.franklincountyema.com).

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