



With Southern California's earthquake in the news, here are some interesting facts and figures you can share with your viewers.

- Earthquakes can trigger other natural disasters: landslides, flash floods, fires, avalanches, and tsunamis.
- Each year in the U.S., an average of six magnitude 6 or higher and 57 magnitude 5 or higher earthquakes occur.
- The largest recorded U.S. earthquake was magnitude 9.2 in Prince William Sound, Alaska, on March 28, 1964.
- The most widely felt series of earthquakes in the lower-48 states took place for three months between 1811 and 1812 along the New Madrid Fault in Missouri. The quakes were felt throughout the Eastern US.
- While earthquakes are more common in the Western US, studies indicate that a severe quake in the Eastern U.S. could be more devastating because the shaking would affect a larger area than a comparable quake in the Western U.S. would. Additionally, population density is high in the East, and many buildings are not built to withstand an earthquake.

The Earthquake-Weather Myth

There is a common belief that earthquakes occur more frequently during hot and dry weather. Actually, scientists have never found a correlation between weather and earthquake activity. Because earthquakes originate miles below ground, they are not affected by weather occurring at the Earth's surface.

According to the US Geological Survey, there are 26 urban areas in the US at risk for significant shakes:

AK: Anchorage

CA: Fresno, Los Angeles, Sacramento, Salinas, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Barbara, Stockton-Lodi

ID: Boise

IN: Evansville

MA: Boston

MO: St. Louis

NM: Albuquerque

NV: Las Vegas, Reno

NY: New York

OR: Eugene-Springfield, Portland

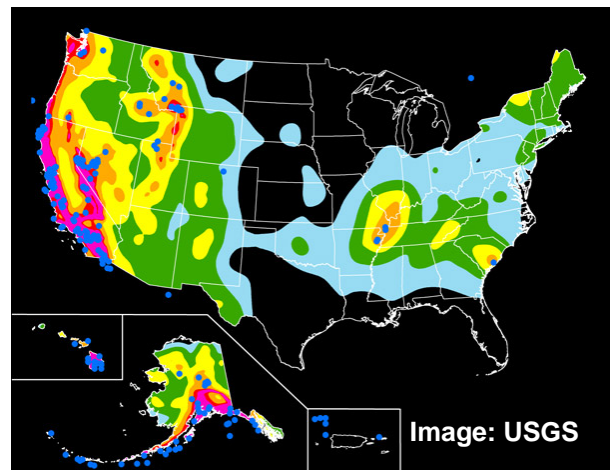
PR: San Juan

SC: Charleston

TN: Chattanooga-Knoxville, Memphis

UT: Provo-Orem, Salt Lake City

WA: Seattle



(Visit www.usgs.gov/hazards/earthquakes/ for a downloadable version of the map above)

Protecting Yourself during an Earthquake

Inside: When the shaking begins, drop to the ground, take cover, and hold on. If you are unable to drop, stay where you are and try to brace yourself. If you are in bed, stay there and protect yourself with a pillow. Stay away from windows, and stay inside until the shaking stops. A common myth is that you should head for a doorway -- In most homes, doorways are no stronger than other areas, and swinging doors can cause injury. Take cover under a strong piece of furniture, instead.

Outside: Find a clear area away from buildings, trees, streetlights, power lines, and other structures that may fall. Drop to the ground and stay still until the shaking stops.

In a Car: Pull over to a clear area, stop, and remain in your car with your seatbelt on.

(Sources: USGS. 2006. Earthquake Hazards - A National Threat. Available from <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2006/3016/>; The National Disaster Education Coalition, July 2004. Talking About Disaster: A Guide for Standard Messages.)