



MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Governor Bryant Proclaims Earthquake Awareness Week

PEARL – Governor Phil Bryant declares Jan. 30-Feb. 3 as Mississippi’s Earthquake Awareness Week. History has shown us that our state is vulnerable to earthquakes. The greatest risk is in the northwest corner of the state which sits on the edge of the New Madrid Seismic Zone. This zone is most famous for a series of earthquakes between 1811 and 1812 which caused more than 2,000 aftershocks. Five of those earthquakes were a magnitude 8 or greater.

“We may not be able to prevent a natural disaster but we can work to ensure our loved ones and communities are better prepared,” said Gov. Bryant. “Families must have a plan for all potential disasters including the threat of an earthquake.”

The New Madrid seismic zone stretches 40 miles wide and 200 miles long and affects parts of Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi and Arkansas. The zone consists of a series of complex faults that cross the Mississippi River in three places and the Ohio River in two places.

“Our greatest concern, as with any emergency, is saving lives which begins with individual and family preparedness,” said Mississippi Emergency Management Agency Director Robert Latham. “For earthquakes personal preparedness starts with citizens learning to ‘drop, cover and hold on’ as well as having a family plan so you know where everyone is once it’s over.”

The strongest recorded earthquake in Mississippi happened in 1931 with a magnitude of 4.6 centered on Tallahatchie County. The earthquake damaged buildings and toppled chimneys. Smaller quakes are felt and registered in Mississippi every year.

MEMA will provide information and preparedness tips throughout Earthquake Awareness Week. For more information, contact MEMA External Affairs at 866-920-MEMA (6362), contact your local emergency management agency or visit us online at www.msema.org.

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