



Central United States Earthquake Consortium

CUSEC

a partnership to mitigate disasters and save lives....

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Experts to Host Public Forum about Earthquakes and Post-Disaster Community Resiliency

Memphis, TN – The Central U.S. Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and several local, national, and international disaster experts, will host a free public forum, *Building Resiliency in the Face of the Earthquake Risk*, from 1:30p.m. to 5:30p.m. on Thursday, October 17, 2013 at the Michael D. Rose Theatre on the University of Memphis main campus. The purpose of this event is to help increase public understanding of potential impacts that citizens, businesses, and communities in the region may face from earthquakes in the New Madrid Seismic Zone (NMSZ).

Professionals with expertise in earthquake hazards, disaster preparedness, building design, and emergency management will present information on building community resiliency to limit injuries, deaths, and economic losses from earthquakes. Participants will also learn about short- and long-term earthquake recovery challenges from experts in New Zealand, where a devastating earthquake sequence struck Christchurch in 2010 and 2011. Featured speakers at this forum will include:

- **Dr. Kelvin Berryman – Director of Natural Hazards, GNS Science, New Zealand** - will share information about the 2010-2011 Christchurch, NZ earthquakes, and similarities between the Memphis and New Zealand earthquake risks
- **Gary Patterson – Director of Education and Outreach, Center for Earthquake Research and Information (CERI)** – will highlight scientific understanding of earthquake hazards in the central U.S.
- **Dr. David Johnston – Social Scientist, GNS Science and Director of the Joint Centre for Disaster Research, Massey University** – will share information pertaining to earthquake response and recovery following the 2010-2011 Christchurch, NZ earthquakes, emphasizing lessons learned for the central U.S.

There will also be a facilitated discussion with a panel of experts to address residential and commercial seismic building code issues. Moderators and panelists, along with keynote speakers, will be on-hand to answer questions from the media and participants throughout the afternoon. Partnering organizations will also have informational booths on how participants can become better prepared for earthquakes and other disasters.

Additionally, the forum is a linked event to the *Great ShakeOut* Earthquake Drill, (www.shakeout.org/centralus) which takes place in Tennessee and 40 other states and territories at 10:17 a.m. earlier in the day. More than 12 million people are expected to participate in ShakeOut drills nationwide, including drills at the University of Memphis and Shelby County Schools.

This forum is being presented in partnership between CUSEC and the Center for Earthquake Research and Information (CERI), the Federal Alliance for Safe Homes (FLASH®), FEMA, the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety (IBHS), the Shelby County Office of Preparedness, the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency (TEMA), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the West TN Structural Engineers Association (WTSEA).

Anyone interested in learning more about earthquake related issues is invited to participate in this event. For more information, contact Jim Wilkinson, Executive Director of CUSEC, at (901) 544-3570.

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