



Central United States Earthquake Consortium

# CUSEC

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

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **CUSEC ENCOURAGES PARTICIPATION IN NATIONAL PREPAREDNESS MONTH**

*All citizens, businesses, and communities in the region encouraged participate*

**MEMPHIS, TN** — As recovery efforts continue from the 6.2 magnitude earthquake that struck central Italy on August 24, 2016; Midwestern residents received a reminder much closer to home reaffirming that the central U.S. remains vulnerable to damaging earthquakes which can occur at any moment with little to no warning.

Shortly after 7a.m. on September 3, 2016, residents in Pawnee, Oklahoma were rattled by a M5.8 earthquake. Stated to be the strongest earthquake on record in the state, the temblor was felt in at least eight states by nearly 60,000 people according to the USGS. On September 9, there was a M3.5 in southeastern Missouri along the New Madrid Seismic Zone. While there was some damage that occurred during the September 3<sup>rd</sup> earthquake, moderately sized earthquakes can—and often do—cause serious damage, injuries, and even loss of life. Many buildings in the Midwest and central U.S. were not built to withstand earthquake shaking. These recent earthquakes serve as poignant reminders that adoption and proper enforcement of seismic building codes are needed within the region to reduce deaths and injuries, economic losses, and improve community resiliency.

CUSEC, along with our many partners throughout the region and Nation, encourages central U.S. residents to take part in National Preparedness Month (NPM). Sponsored by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Ready Campaign ([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov)), National Preparedness Month is observed each September to urge Americans to take steps to prepare for emergencies in their homes, businesses, schools, and communities. According to CUSEC Executive Director Jim Wilkinson, “It is important that citizens know the risks they face—whether it is from earthquakes or not—and how to reduce those risks. National Preparedness Month provides an opportunity for individuals and communities to take steps to be better prepared for all hazards”. Because of this on-going national preparedness effort, there are several opportunities to become better prepared for earthquakes and other disasters in the coming weeks through:

- Becoming familiar with America's PrepareAthon! — a FEMA grassroots campaign for action to increase community preparedness and resilience. This campaign helps to increase the number of individuals who understand which disasters could happen in their community. They can learn about what to do to be safe, as well as mitigate damage, injury and loss of life; and
- Participating in the Great Central US ShakeOut, — a self-led earthquake drill in which participants practice how to "DROP, COVER, and HOLD ON", the recommended personal protective action to take during an earthquake. Millions of Americans participate in ShakeOut-related activities each year. The drill occurs annually on the third Thursday of October with the next drill scheduled for October 20, 2016 at 10:20AM, local time. You can learn more and register to participate at [www.shakeout.org](http://www.shakeout.org).

For more information on activities planned during National Preparedness Month and the Great ShakeOut, please visit the CUSEC website at [www.cusec.org](http://www.cusec.org) or sign up for our newsletter for updates on earthquake planning and preparedness initiatives in the central U.S.

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