



Central United States Earthquake Consortium

CUSEC

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

2630 East Holmes Road

Memphis, TN 38118

Voice: (901) 544-3570

Fax: (901) 544-0544

E-Mail: cusec@cusec.org

Website: www.cusec.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Contact: Jim Wilkinson or
Brian Blake at 901-544-3570**

September is National Preparedness Month

MEMPHIS, TN – September 1, 2012 marks the beginning of National Preparedness Month, an annual campaign coordinated by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to help individuals and communities better prepare for disasters. The Central U.S. Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC) is pleased to partner with FEMA and nearly 15,000 other organizations as part of the “National Preparedness Coalition”. In addition to recent disasters such as Hurricane Isaac, wildfires, and severe weather events around the nation, CUSEC Executive Director Jim Wilkinson notes that:

“In the last month there have been two major earthquakes, the M7.6 in Cost Rica on September 5, and M7.6 in the Philippines on August 31st – those could have just as easily occurred here in the central U. S.

Are we ready for a damaging earthquake? Can more be done beforehand to reduce our vulnerability? Taking an active part in National Preparedness Month and partnering with FEMA is a great way to get engaged and take action, because it’s a matter of when, not if, a disaster may strike.”

According to the White House Office of the Press Secretary, there has been a proclamation by President Barack Obama, encouraging all Americans to join the Preparedness Coalition and become better prepared for disasters. According to the proclamation:

“During National Preparedness Month, we renew our commitment to promoting emergency preparedness in homes, businesses, and communities nationwide, and to building an America more ready and resilient than ever before. Each of us has an important role to play in bolstering our preparedness for disasters of all types -- from cyber incidents and acts of terrorism to tornadoes and flooding.

That is why my Administration is pursuing an approach to emergency management that engages the whole community -- from Federal, State, local, and tribal governments to the private sector, nonprofits, faith based organizations, and the general public. I encourage all Americans to visit www.Ready.gov or www.Listo.gov to learn more about the risks facing their communities, find out what they can do to prepare, and join thousands of individuals from coast to coast by becoming a member of the National Preparedness Coalition.”

Also, in just over six weeks, individuals and communities throughout five states and the District of Columbia will practice **“Drop, Cover, and Hold On,”** the recommended response in the event of an earthquake, during the first ever *Great SouthEast ShakeOut* earthquake drill on **Thursday, October 18, 2012 at 10:18 a.m.** This regional earthquake drill follows on the heels of the one year anniversary of the August 23, 2011 M5.8 Mineral, Virginia earthquake. Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia are encouraging their schools, businesses, organizations, government agencies, communities, and households to participate in this historic event. CUSEC is

honored to be the coordinating organization for the SouthEast ShakeOut, working to engage partners and participants in new ways of earthquake preparedness.

Since 2011, CUSEC has coordinated ShakeOut activities in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. In 2012, more than 2.4 million participated in ShakeOut drills across those states. The next Great Central U.S. ShakeOut is scheduled for February 7, 2013 at 10:15a.m.

The ShakeOut drill is designed to be easy to do and self-led, and primarily includes “**Drop, Cover, and Hold On**” drills held simultaneously at many different locations. This activity provides people and communities an opportunity to practice a simple, yet potentially lifesaving, action should an earthquake occur, as follows:

- ***Drop** to the ground*
- *Take **Cover** under a sturdy table or desk if possible, protecting your head and neck*
- ***Hold On** until the shaking stops*

National Preparedness Month and the Great SouthEast ShakeOut are your chance to practice what to do before an earthquake or disaster strikes in your community, and to learn how to get better prepared for a quick recovery. To get started, visit www.shakeout.org/southeast, and pledge to have your family, school, business, or organization participate in the drill. Once registered, you will receive regular information on how to plan your drill and how to engage your community to become better prepared for earthquakes and disasters.

To register for the ShakeOut, or for more information, visit www.shakeout.org/southeast

For more information on National Preparedness Month, visit, www.ready.gov or www.listo.gov

###