



COUNTY OF HENRY

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY

Ronald Watkins, Director
PO Box 7
575 Cedar Street
Paris, TN 38242

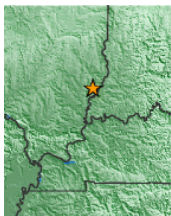
Telephone 731-644-2678
Fax 731-644-2608
E-mail hcema@bellsouth.net

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PRESS RELEASE:

February 9, 2010 (PARIS, TN) The Tennessee Emergency Management Agency has proclaimed this week, February 8-12, 2010, "Earthquake Awareness Week". This year TEMA has again joined with the Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC), and the Center for Earthquake Research and Information (CERI) to promote earthquake preparedness. This year's theme is, "*It Matters! Are You Prepared?*" It is important to keep in mind that an earthquake can occur at any time. Earthquakes are no longer only a concern for citizens along the New Madrid Seismic Zone in the western portions of Tennessee. In addition, there is an unnamed and largely undescribed earthquake zone that roughly parallels Interstate 75 from Chattanooga to near Knoxville. A major earthquake represents what would potentially be the largest natural disaster ever to occur in the state of Tennessee. Some estimates suggest that a major earthquake in the New Madrid zone would be a nationwide catastrophic event, largely due to the interruption in transportation, communications, fuel supply, and other economic consequences that would be experienced as a result of damage to the infrastructure.

The New Madrid seismic zone is one of the most active in the world. Scientist predicts a large magnitude earthquake in the New Madrid seismic zone will occur in the near future. A large magnitude earthquake will definitely affect Henry County in some way. Buildings and bridges could collapse especially older ones. According to CERI's Gary Patterson, "The irony is that the longer we go without an earthquake the closer we are the next." How true this statement is. We must not ignore the threat that exists.



The most recent large earthquake occurred on April 18, 2008, in the Wabash Valley Seismic zone, which is defined by a zone of earthquakes that are scattered across a large area of southeastern Illinois and southwestern Indiana. On this day, Henry County Emergency Management reported the 5.2 magnitude earthquake was felt here around 4:35AM that morning in Paris and Henry County. 911 calls started to inundate the dispatch center around 4:38AM. No injuries or major structural damage occurred as a result of the quake. According to a Central United States Earthquake Consortium (CUSEC) spokesman, that was the highest magnitude earthquake in our region since 1968 when a 5.4 magnitude occurred.

Henry County is less than 75 miles from the New Madrid fault line and the county is predicted to sustain moderate damage to our county. Watkins states, "In light of this projection, 72 hours may not be long enough to prepare to be on your own, when in fact it could take up to a week for emergency services to reach some affected areas in our region. For years, Emergency Managers have recommended creating emergency supply kits to last a family for up to 72 hours. I feel a more realistic plan would be to prepare for at least five days. When this event occurs, all of West Tennessee is going to be overwhelmed with injuries, major damage to buildings, no

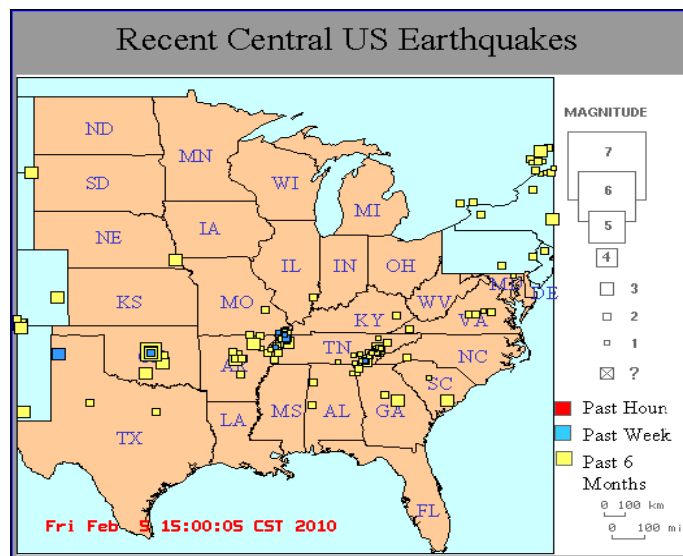
electricity, and communities facing possible isolation from any outside resources for several days. It will be an catastrophic event like no other we have never seen in our lifetime.”

Watkins adds, “The recent earthquake in Haiti gives us a glimpse of the immense destruction that could occur here in our region after a large earthquake. The sheer number of deaths and injuries has been overwhelming for the limited number of medical personnel available. The Haitian earthquake has brought desperately needed resources from all over the world, however, many challenges have shown the difficulty to deliver aid to the ones who need it most. The recovery will take years for this country to get back to any sense of normalcy.

In observance of the Earthquake Awareness Week, each school in the county has been requested to conduct an earthquake drill to familiarize students and faculty with the correct action to take in the event of an actual earthquake. Business, industry, medical facilities, and day cares should take this time to conduct drills and review plans as well. Watkins does suggest a few simple things we all can do to prepare for disaster:

- Purchase a NOAA weather radio for access to important information.
- Build a disaster supply kit with extra food, water, batteries, blankets, matches, clothing, standard tools, first aid kit, and other items useful during disaster situations.
- Anchor heavy items such as bookcases, tall furniture, and pictures to walls to prevent items from falling and causing injuries. Strap gas water heaters to the wall to prevent tipping and gas leaks.
- Make an Earthquake Preparedness Plan and know where to take shelter in your home and at work when the shaking starts. Practice your plan! Stop, Cover, and Hold when shaking begins.
- Use caution when leaving your structure and be weary of hazards such as electric lines, ruptured gas lines, and falling debris.

For additional information, explore the American Red Cross website at www.redcross.org or the Center for Earthquake Research at <http://www.ceri.memphis.edu/index.shtml> or contact the Henry County Emergency Management office at 644-2678.



There are 255 earthquakes on this map that has occurred within the past 6 months.