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For General Release: October 14, 2015

10.5+ Million Californians Drop, Cover & Hold On for 8th Annual ShakeOut – Record Number Practice Improve Earthquake Safety –

The 8th annual Great California ShakeOut earthquake drill on October 15 will involve more than 10.5 million Californians simultaneously practicing “Drop, Cover and Hold On,” the earthquake safety protocol recommended by experts as essential for avoiding injury and even death during earthquakes (see www.earthquakecountry.org/dropcoverholdon).

In addition, millions of people in 45 other states, 5 U.S. territories and the District of Columbia participated in their own ShakeOut drills, along with participants in Canada, New Zealand, and more than 60 other countries. In total more than 22 million people worldwide are participating on October 15th, most at 10:15 a.m. local time. For all of 2015 more than 42 million people are registered to participate worldwide at www.ShakeOut.org.

“Everyone, everywhere, should know how to protect themselves in an earthquake,” said Mark Benthien, Global ShakeOut Coordinator and Director for Outreach at the Southern California Earthquake Center. “People who don’t live in earthquake-prone areas may still travel to one.”

California participants include people in schools, colleges, businesses, government agencies, non-profit organizations, community groups, and many others. See lists of participants along with extensive information on how to participate at www.ShakeOut.org/california.

In a letter to Californians, Governor Jerry Brown wrote “The Great California ShakeOut is the one day each year when government agencies, businesses, civic and faith-based organizations, schools, neighborhoods and families join together to practice how to stay safe when the earth shakes, and to prepare so that our communities will recover quickly after a major earthquake. I call on all Californians to help become better prepared as individuals, families, communities and as a state by taking part in this year’s Great California ShakeOut.”

Speakers at media events in Los Angeles, Oakland, San Jose, and other locations around the state will stress the importance of practicing “Drop, Cover and Hold On” and of being prepared to prevent fires and help others in the immediate aftermath. An event at USC will feature the “Big Shaker” earthquake simulator and other exhibits, followed by a search and rescue exercise with volunteer “victims” transported to a central location for triage and initial treatment. Other LA-area events include a drill at a school for deaf and hard of hearing youth and a simulated high-rise evacuation. The Oakland event will focus on earthquake safety for people with disabilities to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act, and will also feature a “Big Shaker” simulator. Complete details for these media venues are available at www.ShakeOut.org/california/media/venues.

“The CEA is proud to support the preparedness goals of the Great California ShakeOut,” said Glenn Pomeroy, chief executive officer of the California Earthquake Authority, the state’s largest earthquake insurance provider. “The drill is a great reminder of how important it is to know how to protect yourself when the ground shakes. But that’s only half the battle. Insuring your home and belongings from earthquake damage is also critical to survive the financial fallout after the next big one strikes.”

Great ShakeOut Earthquake Drills are coordinated worldwide by the Southern California Earthquake Center (SCEC) at USC, working with a broad network of local ShakeOut coordinators. SCEC is funded by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Science Foundation, U.S. Geological Survey. The Great California ShakeOut is organized by the Earthquake Country Alliance (ECA), which includes California Office of Emergency Services, U.S. Geological Survey, California Earthquake Authority, American Red Cross, and many other organizations. ECA is administered by SCEC and also develops preparedness materials such as the “Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety” available at www.earthquakecountry.org/sevensteps.

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