



**FEMA**

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**Idaho Participating in Cascadia Subduction Zone  
Earthquake and Tsunami Exercise**

*Exercise will test readiness for potential West Coast disaster*

**BOISE** – Emergency management officials in Idaho will take part in a large-scale exercise with Washington and Oregon and FEMA Region 10, June 7-10. The exercise will test state and county preparedness measures for a massive earthquake that could devastate large areas along the West Coast. The exercise scenario is meant to simulate the catastrophic impacts of a Cascadia Subduction Zone magnitude 9.0 earthquake and tsunami.

“While Idaho is not inside the expected physical impact area, we are testing our ability to support our neighbors should a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and tsunami happen,” said Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security Chief Brad Richy. “One of these functions would be to provide support to evacuees and displaced individuals from our neighboring states. Idaho’s participation in this exercise is part of an ongoing effort to maintain an optimal level of readiness.”

IBHS is working with nine northern Idaho counties, the Department of Health and Welfare, all seven Idaho Public Health districts, as well as Oregon and Washington to test the state’s response plans. Emergency operations centers in Boundary, Bonner, Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, Nez Perce, Kootenai, and Shoshone counties will be activated.

“This is a great opportunity to test local emergency plans that will demonstrate our ability to host and provide assistance to evacuees from outside the area, at the same time supporting the needs of our local communities impacted by a large influx of disaster victims,” said Sandy Von Behren, director of Kootenai County Emergency Management.

“Idaho will not significantly feel the ground motions of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake, although we are a very seismically active region of the country,” said Lee Liberty, research professor and manager of the Center for Geophysical Investigation of the Shallow Subsurface at Boise State University. “Any opportunity to increase awareness among Idahoans of earthquake activity in the state and region can only lead to increased public safety.”

“The level of cooperation between FEMA Region 10 and our neighboring states and exercise players has been outstanding and we look forward to strengthening those partnerships,” Richy said.

The “functional” exercise involves simulation of first responders reacting to an incident in real time. A full-scale exercise would involve functional aspects as well as actual deployment of resources in a coordinated response, as if a real incident had occurred. More than 800 people across Idaho will participate in the Cascadia Rising exercise.

Additional information about the June 7-10 Cascadia Rising Exercise can be found at <https://www.fema.gov/cascadia-rising-2016>

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*The Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security is part of the Idaho Military Division. The services we provide are to facilitate emergency management in Idaho, and to assist neighboring states. The men and women of this Division are dedicated to their mission of protecting the lives and property of the people of Idaho, as well as preserving the environmental and the economic health of Idaho.*

*Cascadia Rising 2016 Exercise is a four-day exercise focused on interagency and multi-state coordination. Emergency management centers at local, state, tribal and federal levels in coordination with military commands, private sector and non-governmental organizations in Washington, Oregon and Idaho will activate to coordinate simulated field response operations.*