

Governor's Office of Emergency Services Announces "Don't Get Caught Off Guard" Earthquake Warning Education and Preparedness Campaign

SACRAMENTO -- The California Governor's Office of Emergency Services (Cal OES) announced today the launch of a public awareness campaign to educate all California residents about California's innovative earthquake warning system -- Earthquake Warning California. The campaign, "Don't Get Caught Off Guard," directs Californians to no-cost tools, resources, and information, including the smartphone MyShake App, Android Earthquake Alerts, Government Wireless Emergency Alerts (WEAs), and the earthquake.ca.gov website.

Building upon the success of California's first-in-the-nation earthquake warning system, the "Don't Get Caught Off Guard" education campaign will deliver messages through advertising channels including digital, social media, and broadcast advertising, as well as outreach to community and industry organizations to increase awareness of available technology. The campaign will be sustained through 2022 with an optional one-year extension.

"California is proud to have the first statewide earthquake warning system and now to spread the word broadly about this new innovative, life-saving system," said Cal OES Director, Mark Ghilarducci. "Cal OES's leadership facilitated making warnings publicly available. The public can now have moments of warning before previously unexpected natural disasters. It is changing the world of mitigation and emergency management."

Last year's enacted budget included a \$16.3 million one-time General Fund to finish the build-out of the Earthquake Warning California system on the backbone California Integrated Seismic Network (CISN), including finishing seismic station installation, adding GPS stations to the network, and improving telemetry. The CISN provides the ground motion data needed to estimate the magnitude, location and expected shaking of an earthquake and produce a ShakeAlert® warning. California Governor Gavin Newsom's budget this year includes an additional allocation of \$17.3 million, supported by a one-time loan of the same amount from the School Land Bank Fund, for full operation and maintenance of the system. The General Fund budget also calls for launching a public education campaign to remind Californians that seconds count when warning mobile device users in the area before the ground starts shaking.

The "Don't Get Caught Off Guard" campaign multilingual creative approach uses relatable situations while delivering a serious message encouraging individuals and their families to have tools at the ready to alert them as soon as an earthquake is detected by ground sensors. The broadcast advertising features a combination of humorous, unexpected, and unprompted scenes of real people caught off guard and encourages

people to use Earthquake Warning California resources to give them extra time to protect themselves in an earthquake.

For example, a :30 second broadcast commercial presents an unsuspecting woman posing for a beach photo suddenly doused by an ocean wave, a child playing a piano teetering off the bench onto the floor, and a man falling through the ceiling at a construction site. In another :15 second segment, a shaken fizzy drink erupts on a young man, and a senior is startled when a butterfly flutters out of a greeting card. The ads and other digital assets can be viewed at the Earthquake Warning California website, earthquake.ca.gov.

“Don’t Get Caught Off Guard” encourages audiences to learn more about earthquake preparedness by visiting the website, which includes instructions to download the free MyShake App, or enable Android Earthquake Alerts and WEAs on smartphones. The website also provides the opportunity to sign up for ongoing news and information, participate in virtual public presentations, and download industry-specific informational resources.

The campaign features statewide advertising delivering messages directed to diverse audiences. Over nearly two years the campaign budgets more than \$420,000 for ethnic television (Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, and Vietnamese). There is more than \$1 million dedicated to general market television advertising. Roughly \$2.3 million will be directed at digital advertising, which includes digital, social, and audio streaming.

The campaign will also enlist business and civic groups, government agencies, policymakers, charitable institutions, faith-based organizations, and social services to deliver messages to families, staff, members, and followers. Industry and audience-specific toolkits are available for download in multiple languages on the Earthquake Warning California website.

The announcement comes in advance of the [Great California ShakeOut](#) and International ShakeOut Day, which takes place on Thursday, October 15. Following COVID-19 health and safety guidelines, organizations such as schools and employers, as well as individual families, are encouraged to hold a ShakeOut drill on or around October 15. Last year, 10.8 million California residents participated in the Great California ShakeOut.

“Through broad messaging and targeted outreach launching in October, we believe organizations in all parts of the state will be motivated to help millions of residents take earthquake preparedness steps,” said Ghilarducci. “Education, utilities, first responders, public safety, transportation and others can play a vital role in preventing injuries and minimizing the risk of other hazards in the case of the next Big One.”

Background on Earthquake Warning California

Last October, on the 30th anniversary of the Loma Prieta earthquake, Governor Newsom [announced](#) the launch of the nation's first statewide Earthquake Early Warning System, now named Earthquake Warning California. Earthquake Warning California utilizes CISN, which is a partnership between Cal OES, United States Geological Survey (USGS), UC Berkeley, the California Institute of Technology, and the California Geological Survey. The system uses ground-motion sensors to detect earthquakes that have already started and estimates their size, location, and impact. When it detects a significant magnitude, the system issues a ShakeAlert® Message, providing a warning before shaking begins. Earthquake Warning California marries the [MyShake App](#) and Android Earthquake Alerts with traditional warning delivery methods such as [WEAs](#).

The MyShake App has been downloaded more than one million times since being publicly launched in 2019. In addition, Cal OES recently announced a partnership with Google that includes Earthquake Warning California technology as a feature included in millions of new Android phones and via software updates in existing Android phones used in California.

Earthquake-prone countries like Mexico and Japan have long had earthquake warning systems, with warnings typically delivered through cell phones or public address systems. However, California is the first in the U.S. to offer a statewide earthquake warning system.

Governor Newsom and the Legislature made significant investments to fund disaster planning and preparedness – including Earthquake Warning California – in the 2019 Budget Act.

To learn more about earthquake preparedness, the MyShake App, WEAs, Android Earthquake Alerts, and the latest earthquake warning news and information, visit: earthquake.ca.gov.

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