

# 4.1 Magnitude Earthquake Shakes Northern Israel

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The Sea of Galilee is seen near Tiberias. (photo credit: REUTERS/Ronen Zvulun)

Residents of northern Israel were woken up with a bump on Wednesday morning as a 4.1 magnitude earthquake shook Haifa and the Galilee region shortly before 5:00 a.m.

The Israeli Geophysical Institute said a moderate earthquake measuring 4.1 on the Richter Scale was measured at 4:50 a.m. 14 kilometers (8.6 miles) from the city of Tiberias on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, at a depth of two kilometers. There were no casualties or damage reported, but local residents complained of a rude awakening. A smaller aftershock was felt at 6:50 a.m. said the Geophysical Institute.

Soli Bar-Hen, a resident of Tiberias, told Army Radio that she was woken up by her entire apartment block shaking.

“I thought initially that a rocket had fallen here, there’s such a mess in the north,” Bar-Hen said, referring to growing tension on Israel’s northern front. “When I woke up, I saw that the whole house was shaking, so I just ran outside.”

Bar-Hen added that she lives, like many others in her neighborhood, in a high-rise apartment block and that many fear for the structural integrity of similar buildings.

Israel’s Home Front Command published Wednesday morning a reminder of its instructions regarding how to act during an earthquake, including recommendations to remain calm and to make your way to open outdoor spaces if possible.

Israel is located along the Syrian-African fault line which runs along the Israel-

Jordan border, part of the Great Rift Valley that runs from eastern Lebanon to Mozambique. A major earthquake is statistically due to strike Israel every 80-100 years.

In 1927, a major earthquake registering 6.2 on the Richter Scale struck Israel, killing 500. Another major earthquake is therefore now due.

A 2016 report by the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defense Committee's Home-Front Readiness Subcommittee found that if Israel were to be struck by a 7.5 magnitude earthquake, an estimated 7,000 people would be killed, another 8,600 injured and 377,000 left homeless. In addition, the country could face damage of up to NIS 200 billion (\$55 billion).

According to the National Emergency Authority, there are 80,000 buildings, including schools and hospitals, that are over three stories high and that were built before 1980, making them illegible according to current construction standards.

*Gil Hoffman contributed to this report.*

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