

New study shows Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake could injure as many as 27,000 people

PORTLAND, Ore. - A new study by the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) says a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake could injure as many as 27,000 people in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties.

It also suggests as many as 85,000 people would need shelter and building damages would total as much as \$37 billion.

“While much is being done around our five-county region to prepare government, business, non-profits, and communities for earthquakes, as well as other disasters, the study shows us we need to keep working together to reduce these impacts and become more resilient,” said Denise Barrett, manager of the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization, which partnered with DOGAMI on the study.

The study’s lead investigator, John Bauer from DOGAMI, says they used updated building and population data, current earthquake science, and the latest mapping and modeling techniques to understand the potential impacts.

Before this study, much of the region was relying on estimates that were 20 years old.

Jay Raskin, chairperson of the Oregon Seismic Safety Police Advisory commission said the need to better understand Cascadia earthquake impacts was highlighted in the Oregon Resilience Plan.

“Accurate estimates of injuries and people in need of shelter helps us plan to care for injured people, and to meet the needs of people whose houses or apartments won’t be safe to live in,” Raskin said.

Researchers say if 27,000 people are injured, 20,000 of those injuries will be minor.

“A Cascadia earthquake will happen,” Bauer said. “How well we prepare will

make all the difference in how well we bounce back.”

Phase two of the study will examine how the earthquake could impact Clark and Columbia counties. Researchers expect it will be completed in 2019.

Visit www.OregonGeology.org for a summary of estimated Cascadia earthquake impacts by city, to see Cascadia earthquake expected shaking in the Oregon HazVu interactive map, or to download the full study with maps and data. A video recap of the study is available at: <https://www.youtube.com/user/OregonGeology>. Learn more about the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization at: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/rdpo/>

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