

# Taking preventative measures before potential earthquakes

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Grand Teton National Park is a spectacular site along the Wyoming-Idaho border. The park brings in nearly 4 million visitors a year and creates a scenic background for those who live there.

While the beauty is stunning, it's tempered by the potential of danger from beneath the ground. The majestic mountain range sits on an active fault line that could one day lead to a severe [earthquake](#).

The University of Idaho and the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security are working together with local officials to identify areas that would be most affected in Idaho's Teton County in the event of an earthquake. The results of the survey will allow county leaders and citizens the opportunity to better protect government buildings and private property before an earthquake hits.

“With eastern Idaho's risk from earthquakes, it is important to have the best information so that emergency managers can be prepared and make informed decisions,” said Brig. Gen. Bill Shawver, director of Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security. “This project is a great cooperative effort between Teton County, the University of Idaho and BHS that will increase the ability of emergency managers to plan for earthquakes.”

Teton County's governmental seat is the city of Driggs, roughly 20 miles west of the Teton fault. While this fault has been seismically quiet in recorded historic time, geologists believe it could generate a magnitude 7.2 earthquake at some point in the future.

“Such an earthquake could produce heavy damage in Teton County to structures not built to seismic standards,” explained Bill Phillips, research geologist for the Idaho Geological Survey. “The amount of damage during earthquakes also is influenced by local soil and rock conditions. We are constructing a map of these conditions in Teton County so that emergency planners can be better prepared.”

During the week of July 18-22, geologists will be in the field using seismographs and geophone sensors in 25 places around Teton County to determine what type of soil and bedrock make up the area and how those areas would react during potential earthquake activity.

Results from the survey will be given to the county’s emergency services center.

Provided by University of Idaho

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