

Quake near Canada border jolts southeast Alaska communities

May 1 2017

A major earthquake in northwest British Columbia shook up communities in nearby Alaska but caused no apparent damage.

Kathryn Carl, a teacher in the Alaska village of Klukwan about 40 miles (64 kilometers) from the epicenter, said the magnitude 6.2 quake shook her awake at 4:30 a.m. Carl thought her 80-pound Karelian bear dog had jumped on the bed.

"She was sitting there," Carl said. "She knew about it before we did."

A series of aftershocks, including a magnitude 6.3 quake at 6:18 a.m., kept Carl from getting a restful night's sleep.

Students at Klukwan School, where Carl is head teacher, took the quake in stride. It wasn't even the main topic of conversation.

"They're going fishing," Carl said. "They're getting ready for a hooligan trip." Hooligan are a type of smelt.

The first earthquake struck about 83 miles (134 kilometers) southwest of Whitehorse, Canada, and was felt in Alaska's capital, Juneau, about 134 miles (216 kilometers) to the south. It roused state Rep. Charisse Millett from her sleep and knocked plastic dishware off her counters.

"I am wide awake and super tired now," said the Anchorage Republican, who has experienced her share of earthquakes but is used to them being

shorter.

It's not uncommon for an aftershock to be larger than the triggering quake, though normally the following quakes are smaller, U.S. Geological Survey geophysicist Amy Vaughan said. Other aftershocks ranged from magnitudes 2 to 5.

Vaughan said the shallow initial quake had the potential to cause damage but that the remote location dropped the chances of major problems.

Juneau emergency programs manager Tom Mattice said he received no reports of damage.

Rep. Scott Kawasaki, who said he sleeps in his Capitol office at least twice a week to get work done, also was jolted awake.

The Fairbanks Democrat said he was trying to fall back asleep on the couch when the second quake hit. A video he posted on Twitter showed liquid shaking in an energy drink bottle on a table.

He said he was reminded of the recent renovation of the Capitol, meant to fortify it against earthquakes.

"I was thinking about all the construction work that went into the Capitol, specifically on seismic control," he said. "So I'm glad the Capitol didn't fall into the channel."

Jaimie Lawson, a 911 dispatcher with the Skagway Police Department, said the town 55 miles (89 kilometers) away from the quake did not receive reports of damage or injuries from the initial shaking.

Computers slid around in the mobile home that houses police operations in the valley town of 800, she said, and it was the first earthquake she

felt that forced her to stand up to get her bearings.

Heath Scott, chief of police in Haines, about 60 miles (96.5 kilometers) southeast of the quake epicenter, said it shook a picture frame off his file cabinet. He saw no damage as he toured the city of 2,500.

The geological survey website recorded hundreds of reports of people feeling the shaking.

© 2017 The Associated Press. All rights reserved.

Citation: Quake near Canada border jolts southeast Alaska communities (2017, May 1) retrieved 26 June 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-05-magnitude-earthquake-rattles-corner-canada.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.