



QuakeSmart Provides Keys to Resilience in Anchorage

The FEMA QuakeSmart Preparedness Workshop presented by FLASH and Legacy Partner Simpson Strong-Tie in Alaska took on an extra dimension in the state that LiveScience.com ranks number one on its top ten list of earthquake states. With fewer than 12,000 miles of paved roads, Alaskans must not only be ready for a major earthquake; they must also plan to be self-sufficient as they will likely be isolated when it happens.

More than 100 people from the Anchorage business, nonprofit, and emergency management community attended the workshop to learn about the Alaska risk picture. “Between 1985 and 2015, Alaska has experienced 85 percent of the M5 or greater earthquakes in North America,” according to the Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management Director Michael O’Hare.

The seismically-active state was home to the largest earthquake ever experienced in North America on March 27, 1964. The temblor—dubbed the Good Friday Earthquake—was a M9.2. USGS reports that the earthquake and subsequent tsunamis caused 129 fatalities and an estimated \$2.3 billion in property losses in 2013 dollars. Extensive seismic risk is compounded by the expectation that support from the continental U.S. could take up to seven days to arrive, and that means that Alaskans will need to plan to shelter in place.

Anchorage Office of Emergency Management Emergency Programs Manager Julie Harvey shared sobering statistics for possible losses and sheltering needs from a recent Hazus Study that estimates approximately 530 lives would be lost, 6,360 injured, and 42,620 citizens would be in need of shelter following a catastrophic earthquake. Other presenters at the workshop included Dr. Natalia Ruppert from the Alaska Earthquake Center and Anchorage Mayor Ethan Berkowitz.

One workshop attendee commented, “An excellent workshop; top notch presenters with relevant topics. I will definitely take what I learned today back to my company and improve our resiliency.”

In addition to Legacy Partner, Simpson Strong-Tie, the FLASH partnership for the workshop included the Association of Continuity Planners, State of Alaska Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Management, Alaska Partnership for Infrastructure, Anchorage Office of Emergency Management, University of Alaska – Alaska Earthquake Center, PDC Engineers and SAFE-T-PROOF Earthquake Fasteners.

More than 1,200 people have attended 22 Ready Business and QuakeSmart Workshops across the U.S. since program inception. Additional workshops will be held Aug. 2 in Renton, WA, Aug. 8 in San Juan, PR, Aug. 10 in Mayaguez, PR, and Oct. 11 in Oklahoma City, OK. The Puerto Rico workshops will be presented in English and Spanish. Visit flash.org/readybusiness for registration information or email Barbara Harrison for more information.