

# FIRST PERSON: Think you're prepared for all disasters? Better be sure.

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*"The prudent sees danger and hides himself, but the simple go on and suffer for it" (Proverbs 22:3 ESV)*

The Book of Proverbs is filled with practical life wisdom. The verse above is applicable to many areas of life, particularly disaster situations. Thinking through situations (seeing the danger) and making basic preparations (hiding himself) before a situation unfolds is the key difference between being one who suffers and one who survives and can minister in the midst of the situation.

In our world today we are faced with many dangers. Seeing and preparing are key elements. Being prepared opens the door to ministry and service in the day of disaster. This week is Fall Severe Weather Preparedness Week in Mississippi as designated by Governor Tate Reeves.

The Mississippi Emergency Management Agency has been sharing a number of severe weather tips through various news, print, and social media outlets with a focus each day on a different aspect of severe weather that we experience in

Mississippi. You may access those informational tips at the MEMA Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/msemaorg>) or their website (<https://www.msema.org/fall-severe-weather-preparedness-week-2021/>).

The Oct. 20 focus was on tornadoes, and the various organizations and communities in the state conducted a tornado drill. This would be a good time to review the emergency situation guidelines with people in your office, and consider as well what to do at home and public venues.

Tornadoes and severe weather are not the only disasters we face in Mississippi. Oct. 21 is the "2021 National Shake Out" highlighting the dangers posed to our nation from earthquakes. You may say, "Mississippi doesn't experience earthquakes," but you are only partially right.

The state has not experienced a significant earthquake since the winter of 1811-12, when most of Mississippi was affected by the series of great earthquakes along New Madrid Fault Zone that runs from southeast Missouri through northeast Arkansas to just west of Memphis.

Three earthquakes of magnitude 7.2 to 8.2 on the Richter Scale, along with aftershocks, struck the central U.S. during that period. It is recorded that church bells rang spontaneously in Boston during the seismic events.

So powerful were those earthquakes that sections of the mighty Mississippi River actually ran backwards for a period of time. Reelfoot Lake in northwest Tennessee is believed by geologists to have been created by the geographic/topographic changes brought on by the earthquakes.

An anticipated seismic event along this fault line today could bring devastating effects to north and west Mississippi and as far south as the Jackson metro area, so what can be done to prepare?

There are a number of resources from those who face earthquakes on a regular basis that can provide direction. These two, <https://www.earthquakecountry.org/sevensteps/>, and <https://www.earthquakecountry.org/step5/> from the Earthquake Country Alliance at the University of Southern California, can help you prepare.

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