

## National

# Strong Mexico quake shakes buildings and nerves in California

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*New York Times*

A powerful earthquake southeast of Tijuana shook Southern California on Sunday afternoon, damaging buildings in northern Mexico and border cities in California and Arizona and rattling a seismically sophisticated population as far north as Los Angeles and Las Vegas as chandeliers swayed, homes shook and the earth seemed to slide under the feet of people emerging from Easter church services for well over a minute.

The 7.2-magnitude quake struck just after 3:30 p.m. local time, and was centered 16 miles southwest of Guadalupe Victoria in Baja California, Mexico, and about 110 miles southeast of Tijuana, said the United States Geological Survey.

Carlton Hargrave, 64, was standing in the entryway of Family Style Buffet in Calexico, a California border town, when the quake hit. His restaurant, he said in a telephone interview, was "almost completely destroyed."

"We've got tables overturned, plates broken on the floor, the ceilings caved in," Mr. Hargrave said with a shaky voice over the sound of his feet crunching rubble and glass. "It was big. I mean, it was major."

Reports from the area in Mexico where the quake hit were slow in coming. An earthquake of that size would probably cause major property damage near the epicenter, experts said. In northern Mexico, one person was killed in a house collapse.

Initial reports from the quake's

epicenter near Mexicali, a large industrial city and the state capital of Baja California, did not speak of catastrophic damage, although photographs posted on Twitter and some news sites showed buildings with crumbled facades and food on supermarket shelves sent crashing to the floor. There were sporadic reports of fires, gas leaks and phone line damage, but none could be confirmed in the hours immediately following the quake.

The Associated Press, citing the Baja California state civil protection director, Alfredo Escobedo, said a multistory parking structure collapsed at the Mexicali city hall but no one was injured.

"In a 7.2, you are going to experience a lot of shaking," said Morgan Page, a geophysicist with the Geological Survey. "So it would be surprising if there wasn't a lot of damage. Mexico does have

many vulnerable structures."

Postings on Twitter told of people in shock in Mexico as well as in southern California.

"People were outside crying because the beams looked like they were going to collapse and a wall cracked (along with various things falling) and the power went out in some parts," read one report from Calexico.

In the United States, the shaking was particularly acute in San Diego, where it set off alarms and sent the San Diego fire department responding to several calls, The San Diego Union-Tribune reported.

"We have some reports of scattered property damage," Sgt. Ramona Hastings of the San Diego Police Department said in a telephone interview.



Photo by SANDY HUFFAKER/GETTY IMAGES

**A man in Calexico, Calif., swept up broken glass after a 7.2 magnitude earthquake struck on Sunday.**

At a Sheraton hotel in downtown San Diego, the floor cracked open and prevented the front doors from shutting. Officials ordered all guests and staff from the building, pending an inspection from structural engineers. Fire officials reported a water main break in front of a hospital and another water line break at a department store.

"There's scattered stuff all over the place," said Maurice Luque, a spokesman for the San Diego fire department. "There's nothing colossal."

Even for California residents who are veterans of previous and more punishing earthquakes, the temblor was impressive.

"House was shaking. Pic fell off bookcase. Lasted about 30 seconds. Worst I've felt here since Northridge," Timothy Nash said in a Twitter message from San Diego.

The Northridge earthquake of

Jan. 17, 1994 — a 6.7-magnitude temblor that was centered in the Los Angeles neighborhood of Reseda — lasted for about 20 seconds but proved to be one of the most devastating natural disasters to hit the United States. There were 72 deaths attributed to the quake, and it caused an estimated \$20 billion in damage.

Initial reports indicated that Sunday's earthquake, while bigger in magnitude, caused nowhere near the damage.

While this earthquake exceeded the numerical magnitude of the 7.0 earthquake in Haiti earlier this year, the damage there was far greater because the epicenter was near the heavily populated capital city, Port-au-Prince.

The Baja earthquake was the largest in a series that have taken place in the region that presages it, beginning with a 4.2 quake on March 31. It was followed by strong

aftershocks.

In Los Angeles, homes slid from side to side for well over a minute, a nauseating and seemingly endless wave that could be felt from the beach to the Hollywood Hills. Power failures caused by the temblor were reported in Yuma, Ariz.

Emilio Magaña, 39, a priest at St. Patrick's Roman Catholic Church in Calipatria, Calif., had just finished a morning of Easter services at different locations around rural Imperial County and was napping in his church in the middle of lettuce and carrot fields when the quake struck.

"I awoke to my bed shaking and heard some pictures from the walls falling down," he said. "My nerves were a little rattled because it was a long earthquake. It lasted almost 2 minutes. It was one very long one, then short temblors. I've never felt anything like it."

## What's Choppin'?

By PAIGE CASTREN AND ANTERPREET KAUR

### "Bastard" gets thumbs down

AP English teacher Teri Hu resubmitted *Bastard out of Carolina* by Dorothy Allison for approval from the FUSD board of education. Last year the board members voted three to two against the novel. The new verdict will be announced during the June school board meeting.

### PTSA organizes new fundraisers

PTSA aims to raise \$5,000 or more for WHS and PTSA through fundraisers such as Jamba Juice School Appreciation; eScrip; Raley's Quality of Life and Supporting Humanities, Arts, Recreation, Education, and Sports (S.H.A.R.E.S.) program.

## School

# Info about CHSPE not readily available to students

NICOLE PHAM  
*The Hatchet*

Those dissatisfied with the school system can leave early by taking the California High School Proficiency Examination (CHSPE), but few Washington students know about it.

Most students drop out, complete independent study or attend an alternative school. Some students learn about the CHSPE through word of mouth, but the school has not communicated this option to all juniors and seniors.

According to state law, high school principals are required to distribute an announcement explaining the CHSPE to each student in grades 11 and 12. The superintendent is responsible for informing the principals.

Students who pass CHSPE earn the legal equivalent of a high

school diploma by obtaining a Certificate of Proficiency, even without the required units for graduation. Those interested must be between 16 and 18 years old. The exam includes math and English language arts sections. Taking and passing CHSPE, however, does not necessarily require a student to leave high school.

"I believe students should be made aware of this option by school staff," superintendent Milt Werner said, in an e-mail.

Principal Linda Fernandez relies on career technician Michelene Wittmer and school counselors Carol Brahmst, Britny Stewart and Carrie Merfeld to relay information about CHSPE to students.

In her eight years as a counselor, Stewart knows of two students who took the test.

"For most people, it's not the alternative they want to take,"

Stewart said. "They don't want a full exit."

English teacher Teri Hu prepared "How Would You Like to Finish High School Early?," a presentation about CHSPE, at a Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) meeting Dec. 7.

"It is not up to counselors, teachers or administrators to determine if a student would possibly want to take CHSPE," Hu said.




"At most, maybe a dozen or so

kids will take it, but that will be a dozen kids who would otherwise be miserable in high school."

The test is administered three times a year: March, June and November. Though the March 21 test date passed, those interested can apply for the June 19 test by May 21.

The fee is \$92 for regular registration, \$120 for late registration and \$145 for special registration. Results are mailed July 23.

## Fast facts

-  It differs from the General Education Development (GED) test and California High School Exit Exam (CAHSEE).
-  Passing the exam is equivalent to having a high school diploma.
-  You must be at least 16 years old or enrolled in the tenth grade for one school year or longer.