

# **Are you ready to rumble?**

**Mandy Feder, Lake County Record-Bee, 5-13-10**

Are you ready to rumble? I am not absolutely certain I am. Many people think we're in for the big quake. Ink Out Loud -- Standing on shaky ground

Insurance companies are sending press releases with precautions and safety instructions.

I remember some rules, such as standing in doorways and taking stairs as opposed to elevators. The American Red Cross maintains that doorways are no stronger than any other part of a structure. It is advised that during an earthquake you should get under a sturdy piece of furniture and hold on. This will provide some protection from falling objects.

I set out to find credible and reputable sources of information. There are all types of sources that give earthquake advice, including earthquake psychics. So I referred to my New York Times reference book.

USGS Scientist Michael Blanpied said, "There is no organization, or government or scientist capable of successfully predicting the time or occurrence of an earthquake."

The American Red Cross offers the following advice: If you are inside when the shaking starts, drop, cover and hold on, move as little as possible. If you are in bed, stay there, curl up and hold on. Protect your head with a pillow. Stay away from windows to avoid being injured by shattered glass. Stay indoors until the shaking stops and you are sure it is safe to exit. If you must leave the building after the shaking stops, use stairs rather than an elevator in case there are aftershocks, power outages or other damage. Be aware that fire alarms and sprinkler systems frequently go off in buildings during an earthquake, even if there is no fire.

If you are outside when the shaking starts, find a clear spot and drop to the ground, stay there until the shaking stops. Be sure to stay away from buildings, power lines, trees, streetlights. If you are in a vehicle, pull over to a clear location and stop. Avoid bridges, overpasses and power lines if possible. Stay inside with your seatbelt fastened until the shaking stops. Then, drive carefully, avoiding bridges and ramps that may have been damaged. If a power line falls on your vehicle, do not get out. Wait for assistance. If you are in a mountainous area or near unstable slopes or cliffs, be alert for falling rocks and other debris. Landslides are often triggered by earthquakes.

There are 45 states and territories in the U.S. at moderate- to very high-risk of earthquakes and they are located in every region of the country.

An article appearing in the Wine Spectator titled "Powerful Earthquake Rocks Chilean Wine," reminded me of the financial implications following natural disasters.

The article states, "Chile's wine industry was not spared from the effects of the devastating 8.8-magnitude earthquake that struck the southern part of the country." Wineries in both the Curicó and Maule valleys, which are not far from the epicenter, were hit hard and wineries further north in Rapel and Maipo also reported damage.

Of course, the immediate focus in Chile was rescue. Advanced earthquake planning saved countless lives there.

After the shock of the actual occurrence and taking care of health and safety issues, there are other considerations.

A similarity that may resonate with people in Northern California is wine.

Winemaking is a leading industry in Chile. The two regions around the epicenter, Maule and Bío-Bío are crucial to long-term economic recovery. Winemakers faced huge losses with broken bottles and vats, damaged facilities and disrupted electrical power making it difficult, if not impossible, to process grapes normally.

This certainly is food for thought for Lake County, heavily vested in the wine industry.