

## Western States Seismic Policy Council 2012 National Awards in Excellence

### *Overall Award in Excellence for Outreach*

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<b>Administering Agency:</b>	Earthquake Country Alliance
<b>Program Name:</b>	Public Education Activities
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#### **Program Summary**

The Earthquake Country Alliance (ECA) is a public-private partnership that began in 2003 in Southern California and expanded statewide in 2009 in coordination with the Bay Area Earthquake Alliance and Redwood Coast Tsunami Work Group. ECA's development has been coordinated by the Southern California Earthquake Center (SCEC), along with the California Emergency Management Agency, (CalEMA), USGS, California Earthquake Authority, American Red Cross, and many others. The mission of the ECA is to support and coordinate efforts that improve earthquake and tsunami resilience in California. The statewide ECA organizes the annual Great California ShakeOut earthquake drill each October, updates and distributes *Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country* and other publications, and maintains and supports the EPIcenter network of museums and other informal learning venues. In 2011, ECA received a 2011 FEMA award for Awareness to Action.

The ECA's cornerstone activity is The Great California ShakeOut ([www.shakeout.org](http://www.shakeout.org)), an annual statewide earthquake drill that began in 2008 and which involves millions of participants each year (8.6 million in 2011); it is intended to inspire preparedness in schools, businesses, state agencies, and all other organizations. Each October, participants across California perform "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" drills and many also test other aspects of their emergency plans. A key aspect of the ShakeOut is the integration of science-based earthquake research and decades of social science research about why people get prepared. Participants receive information on how to plan their drill and how to create a dialogue with others about preparedness. ShakeOut has continued to grow quickly and is also now held each October in Nevada, Oregon, Idaho, British Columbia, and Guam. The Central US ShakeOut was first held in April 2011 and next in February 2012 with 9 states (Alabama, Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Tennessee). Over 12 million people participated in 2011 (see [www.shakeout.org/history](http://www.shakeout.org/history)). Other areas considering ShakeOut drills include South/North Carolina, Washington, Alaska, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, New Zealand, Tokyo (and eventually all Japan), and Turkey. SCEC hosts the website and provides consultation for each of these drills, to maintain consistency in the brand and work towards unified earthquake messaging worldwide.

The ECA also publishes a number of region-specific earthquake and tsunami preparedness handbooks. In spring 2011, the ECA updated *Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country* (PDR), a well-known handbook for Southern California. This 32-page manual provides earthquake science, mitigation, and preparedness

information to the public according to the *Seven Steps to Earthquake Safety*. Over 5.5 million copies have been distributed since 1995. The booklet has also provided the framework for the development of booklets for other regions. The first was a San Francisco Bay Area PDR produced by the USGS with the Red Cross and many other organizations. ECA's Redwood Coast Tsunami Work Group distributes *Living on Shaky Ground* (LOSG) (which also now includes the *Seven Steps*), and in 2011, tsunami content from this booklet was incorporated in the Southern California booklet. Versions of PDR and LOSG have been created for Utah (2009), Oregon (2010), Idaho (2010), and the Central U.S. (2010). Versions in Spanish and other languages have also been developed in California, and The Seven Steps to an Earthquake Resilient Business is a 16-page supplement for use anywhere. All of these publications and more are available for download or for physical copies to be ordered at [earthquakecountry.org/roots](http://earthquakecountry.org/roots).

The ECA's Earthquake Education and Public Information Centers (EPIcenters) network was created in 2008 to connect organizations that educate the general public in informal settings and support their earthquake awareness efforts. EPIcenters comprise free-choice learning institutions, representing museums, science centers, libraries, universities, parks, and other places visited by broad audiences including families, seniors, and school groups. Thus far, the ECA has established relationships with over fifty institutional partners. A primary impetus for the development of the network was to broaden participation in the ShakeOut but has since grown to be more comprehensive in its scope. These organizations also serve as a distribution point for other ECA resources such as Putting Down Roots. The EPIcenter website at [www.earthquakecountry.org/epicenter](http://www.earthquakecountry.org/epicenter) showcases members, events, and resources. Regional networks are led by the San Bernardino County Museum in Southern California and by the San Jose Tech Museum in the San Francisco Bay Area.