

QUAKE

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pared for a major quake.

"The perception is definitely lagging behind the scientific data," Weldon said. "People are going to be surprised by this. In general, people are underestimating the hazard that exists."

Unfortunately, it is going to take a sizable quake to hit the Northwest before Oregonians realize the hazard that exists, Pezzopane said.

These recently completed maps have already appeared in the autumn issue of the University's *Old Oregon* magazine.

The maps will also be published in technical journals, Pezzopane said.

By studying the history of earthquakes, geologists have found that large quakes re-occur every 300 to 500 years in this state, Pezzopane said, and the last one to shake the area occurred about 300 years ago.

"The coast will be hit the hardest because the subduction zones would be closest to the source of the biggest quake," he said.

Although Oregon is clearly at risk from a major quake off the coast — where an oceanic crustal plate is sliding underneath the North American continental plate — fault lines that radiate across the state also pose a risk.

In the Cascades, the potential hazards could come from volcanic activity and crustal faults. Closer to home, the Willamette Valley could suffer considerable damage because of loose soil conditions. These conditions could amplify a quake's vibration, increasing the risk to Oregon's most populated areas.

"This could be a problem because soft sediment amplifies like Jell-O," Pezzopane said.

The amount of damage done to the Eugene area from a coastal earthquake depends mostly on the magnitude, Weldon said.

Weldon said an 8 on the Richter scale could do some



This map shows the potential risk due to strong ground shaking from earthquakes associated with active faults near and within Oregon. Roughly 80 percent of the Oregon population resides within a high-risk area.

damage and perhaps cause deaths in particular situations, such as construction workers on ladders or workers in a trench.

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— Silvio Pezzopane, Graduate student

"If it is a 9, that is 40 times the energy release," Weldon said. "That would cause significant damage and considerable loss of life. However, we are still far enough away that it would not cause total devasta-

tion."

Pezzopane said people should prepare themselves and their homes in the event that a quake should hit.

"Everyone should place all heavy objects on the floor, strap down your water heater and make sure your house is strapped down to the foundation because some are not," Pezzopane said.

In addition, Pezzopane said everyone should prepare a supply of food, water, flashlights and first aid kits.

"The conferences that I've been going to all say that it will be at least 72 hours that we'll have to go without help from anyone (directly following an earthquake)," Pezzopane said. "And that is the minimum."

Pezzopane created his maps on the computer, using Landscape Architecture Professor Dave Hulse's program, called Geographical Information System. The maps are only one of Pezzopane's projects that he is working on to complete his doctorate.



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