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For Immediate Release
November 2, 2015

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Statewide exercise to test more than 75 agencies *Participants will practice responding to a massive earthquake*

PHOENIX – Preparing for and responding to various emergencies is central to the Arizona Department of Emergency and Military Affairs (DEMA) mission. On Nov. 4, 2015, multiple federal, state, and local agencies, along with representatives from non-governmental, private and voluntary organizations, will conduct a statewide exercise to test their ability to respond to a magnitude 7.0 earthquake.

The exercise will allow agencies to evaluate their current plans, procedures and capabilities in response to the simulated impacts, including massive structure damage and mass communication disruption, of a hypothetical seismic event.

The State Emergency Operations Center (SEOC), along with county EOCs, will activate for the duration of the day-long functional exercise. A functional exercise is a simulated emergency event that tests and evaluates the coordination, collaboration and roles of various personnel at multiple organizations.

Nov. 4 will include an amateur radio communication exercise to test alternative means of communicating when critical infrastructure fails. Radio operators will participate from their respective home bases.

“Creating plans regarding how to respond to an emergency and then testing those plans with our partners is a big part of emergency management,” said Wendy Smith-Reeve, DEMA’s Deputy Director. “It allows us to see what works, and what deficiencies need to be addressed. Exercising together helps the whole community be better prepared for potential emergencies.”

The exercise is a good reminder to the public to take a few steps to be prepared in the event of an emergency: create a family communication plan with an out of town contact and an evacuation route; build a 72-hour emergency supplies kit with food, water, first-aid kit, prescriptions, flashlight, batteries, etc.; and be informed of what hazards may occur in your community.

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Visit the Arizona Emergency Information Network at www.EIN.Az.gov for official emergency updates, preparedness and hazard information, and multimedia resources.