



# Malheur County Building Department

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April 1, 2020  
For Immediate Release

## Challis National Forest Earthquake

On March 31, 2020, a magnitude 6.5 earthquake struck 72 miles northeast of Boise.

What does that mean to us in Malheur County?

This is a good reminder that Malheur County is in an earthquake zone. The last substantial earthquake occurred in 1983.

Every building will react differently in a seismic event. This depends greatly on how the structure was constructed and the soil classification.

Everyone should be reviewing their property for damage. Document your structure, similar to what you would do for fire loss, pictures are a great example.

**Commercial-** Retail, Industrial, Educational, Medical, Multi Family, Religious etc.

The most susceptible buildings to seismic damage is un-reinforced masonry building, single or multi story. Multi story buildings with glass store fronts, soft stories, are at great risk.

Things to look for include but are not limited to separation of mortar in bricks, headers with cracks and on the inside of the building any change to finish material such as cracked drywall or plaster. The damage can be very subtle or it can be eye catching.

Check all parapets, cornices or other projection to ensure they are not a fall hazard. Sprinkler systems seismic bracing should be checked to ensure they are still fully attached and in place.

Check the outside ground area for any separation of soil including buckling of parking lots or sidewalks.

Any fuel or compressed gas tanks should be checked for displacement.

**Residential-** Single Family Homes, Garages etc.

Review all of your property for damage. If you have a basement check to ensure no post or support columns have been displaced. Check all chimneys for separation and fall hazards.

**Buildings under construction-**all types of structures

Buildings under construction are susceptible to damage as most are in temporary phase, such as truss bracing prior to roof sheathing. Please check all construction sites prior to resuming work for any damage.

Resources-

<https://www.fema.gov/earthquake>

<https://www.ready.gov/earthquakes>

<https://www.usgs.gov/faq/natural-hazards>

The building department does not perform detailed inspections after a seismic event on existing structures. If you hire a professional to assist you with any repair or evaluation of your structure please make sure to check with the Oregon Construction Board to ensure you are working with a licensed professional.

<https://www.oregon.gov/ccb/Pages/index.aspx>

If you have any questions please contact me. The safety of our community is priority and can help assist you.

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