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## Over 8,000 Residents Have Signed up For VITEMA's 2021 Virgin Islands Great ShakeOut Tsunami Drill

Community Center / **Published On October 20, 2021 06:00 PM /**

Staff Consortium **October 20, 2021**

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An initiative the V.I. Territorial Emergency Management Agency is calling the "2021 Virgin Islands Great ShakeOut Drill," will be held on Thursday at 10:21 am EST.

According to VITEMA, the drill is always held on the third Thursday of October. The Great ShakeOut is a nationwide, annual earthquake preparedness drill that the territory participates in along with the continental U.S. and other countries across the globe. On the day of the drill at 10:21 am, participants will be required to stop whatever they are doing to "Drop, Cover, and Hold On" as if there was a major earthquake occurring. Once they've stayed in the position for about 60 seconds, they will then evacuate from wherever they are located to the nearest designated safe zone.

The Virgin Islands are located at an active tectonic plate boundary between the North American plate and the northeast corner of the Caribbean plate. Major plate movements have and can cause large magnitude earthquakes which then can result in devastating tsunamis. Earthquakes are usually caused when tectonic plates suddenly break and there is rapid motion along a fault. This sudden release of energy causes the seismic waves that make the ground shake.

VITEMA said an integrated public alert and warning system (IPAWS) will be going out at the start of the drill to inform the territory that the drill is occurring. This will be a test, and it will explicitly state it is a test in the message.

As of Wednesday, 8,371 residents have registered to participate this year.

The ShakeOut drill is for everyone: schools, businesses, faith-based organizations, individuals and families Covid-19 protocols should be.

To learn more about how to “Drop, Cover, and Hold On,” visit [www.shakeout.org/usvi](http://www.shakeout.org/usvi). VITEMA also has informational videos posted on its social media accounts to describe the drill and demonstrate the steps.

To register for the drill, go to [www.shakeout.org/usvi](http://www.shakeout.org/usvi), and there will be a simple registration form to fill out. Registration takes about a minute.