

Earthquakes in Indiana

Yes, earthquakes do occur in Indiana! Compared to more famous active earthquake regions, Hoosier quakes are less intense and frequent, but happen often enough to be of concern to the engineers who build dams, power plants, and large buildings. Earthquakes result from sudden movements along a fault several miles deep within the Earth, creating a sudden release of energy. The old, dense rocks of the Midwest and eastern United States can transmit seismic waves long distances, which means that Indiana can experience shaking from epicenters hundreds of miles away.

Earthquakes around the world are recorded on the seismograph at the seismic station on the Bloomington campus of Indiana University. Scientists at the Indiana Geological Survey study such data to provide estimates of the frequency and magnitude of Hoosier earth movements for engineers and planners.

To date, 44 earthquakes having a magnitude greater than 3.0 have occurred in Indiana since 1817. All but 14 were clustered in the southwestern corner of the state.

