

California Earthquake Swarm Strikes Dangerous Fault Scientists Say Is Overdue for a Major Quake

A rapid series of earthquakes struck California's San Francisco Bay Area on Thursday, rattling one of the nation's most dangerous fault zones as scientists continue to warn the region is overdue for a major seismic event.

The initial magnitude 3.8 earthquake struck near San Leandro around 8:30 a.m. local time, according to the U.S. Geological Survey. It was initially measured at magnitude 4.1 before being downgraded. Multiple smaller earthquakes followed in rapid succession.

The activity occurred near the Hayward Fault, which cuts through the densely populated East Bay and last produced a major earthquake in 1868. No major damage or injuries were reported, although BART temporarily slowed trains for track inspections and experienced delays.



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The Daily Mail reported that scientists have long warned about the potential for a destructive earthquake along the Hayward Fault.

"The fault is overdue for an earthquake that could cause extensive damage to such a dense population zone," a team from California's Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory said.

The news outlet also cited geophysicist Stefan Burns, who said Thursday's activity remains within normal parameters but

outlined what could signal a more serious development.

“As of now, the activity is normal, but if we start to see more swarming and let’s say multiple magnitude 4.0 earthquakes along the Hayward Fault in this location or nearby in quick succession, then something bigger is happening,” Burns told the Daily Mail.

Burns has warned that the next six to 12 months could be significant following major seismic activity elsewhere in the Americas.

“Because we’ve been seeing so much activity in Northern California, it’s hard to rule out Northern California,” Burns said. “So really all of California is problematic right now.”

For now, Thursday’s earthquakes caused relatively minor disruption. But their location along a fault capable of producing a devastating major earthquake puts renewed attention on one of California’s most closely watched seismic threats.

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