

# Dam Safety- Fact Sheet

Montana Watercourse and Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
Water Resources Division



## Earthquakes

Fact Sheet: 8

Montana is a seismically active state with large areas near faults and active zones. A dam owner should be aware of active faults and historical seismic activity in their area. Online maps are available from the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG) and the United States Geological Survey (USGS).

For maps and additional information visit the USGS Earthquake Hazards Program and the MBMG Earthquake Studies Office.

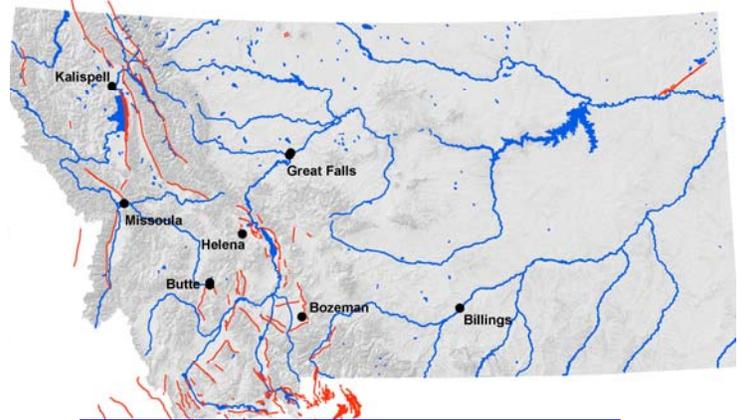
<http://earthquake.usgs.gov/>

<http://mbmgquake.mtech.edu/>

The Northwestern and Southwestern parts of the state have the highest probability of seismic activity. While an earthquake can happen anywhere, an owner should be aware of historical earthquakes in their area and mapped fault lines. Information on earthquakes and seismic zones is readily available on the internet by the agencies shown above.



As with any other event, the dam should be inspected after any noticeable earthquake (See Dam Fact Sheet #2). Look for movement, cracking, sloughing or displacement of the dam. Also check that outlet works are functioning properly and in the correct alignment. If a large event occurs (greater than magnitude 5.5) you should hire an engineer to inspect your dam for damage. Not all damage will be obvious.



Known Active Faults in Montana

For more questions, comments, additional fact sheets, and area specific information you can contact DNRC or Montana Watercourse at the addresses below or on the web.

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[www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water\\_op/dam\\_safety](http://www.dnrc.mt.gov/wrd/water_op/dam_safety)