

Earthquake causes tremors across county

Written by Elizabeth Barrett

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Dawson County Emergency Management director Brian Woldt was working in his yard Sunday when he received a call from a Gothenburg resident.

Woldt said the caller wanted to know what had exploded in Gothenburg.

Nothing had blown up but Woldt later learned that windows rattled and floors shook across the county from an earthquake with a 3.0 magnitude.

U.S. Geological Survey officials said the quake happened around 2:55 p.m.

After the call from Gothenburg, Woldt checked with the National Weather Service in Hastings and discovered that an earthquake had jiggled both Dawson and Custer counties.

USGS officials said the epicenter, or point of the earth's surface vertically above the focus of the quake, was six miles southwest of Oconto. Oconto is 26 miles north of Lexington.

No damage was reported although Woldt said people reported tremors from Johnson Lake to Overton to Gothenburg.

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According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, magnitude is the amount of energy released during an earthquake which is computed from the amplitude of the seismic waves.

A magnitude of 7.0 on the Richter Scale indicates an extremely strong earthquake.

FEMA officials say that each whole number on the scale represents an increase of about 30 times more energy released than the previous whole number represents.

Therefore, an earthquake measuring 6.0 is about 30 times more powerful than one measuring 5.0

Earthquakes happen because of a sudden slipping or movement of a portion of the earth's crust, accompanied and followed by a series of vibrations, FEMA officials said.

Woldt said he's been fielding calls from all over since the quake.

"Someone in Overton thought

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