

# **‘Big One’ talk swirls as 69 massive earthquakes hit the Pacific’s Ring of Fire in 48 hours**

A large swath of earthquakes hit the Pacific’s so-called Ring of Fire earlier this week, prompting some to wonder if it is a precursor to the oft-discussed massive earthquake, colloquially known as “the Big One.”

Sixty-nine earthquakes, including 16 tremors registering 4.5 or above on the Richter scale, recently hit the area, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), which recorded the events but did not issue a warning.

Several of the quakes registered significant impacts, including one that hit 5.0 and shook the area on Tuesday morning. Fiji appeared to be the most impacted, as five tremors above a 4.5 magnitude hit the small island.

## **‘BIG ONE’ COMING? EARTHQUAKES OFF THE WEST COAST COULD TRIGGER A GLOBAL EVENT**

Luckily, the earthquakes did not reach the western coast of the U.S., which partially sits on the Cascadia subduction zone, a fault that stretches from mid-Vancouver Island to Northern California. The recent tremors have sparked concern that “the Big One” could be near, according to The Daily Mail, but the USGS has made no mention of this.

Of the 69 earthquakes, 53 hit the area on Sunday, followed by the 16 subsequent tremors, impacting Indonesia, Bolivia, Japan and the aforementioned Fiji.

## **“The Big One”**

“The Big One” is often described as an earthquake with a magnitude 8 or above, causing massive destruction to California, which some have said is overdue for an earthquake of this magnitude. California sits on the San Andreas fault, a 750-mile fault that has been responsible for some of the state’s most devastating earthquakes.

The last earthquake that came close to a 8.0 magnitude in California was the

great earthquake of 1906, which hit a magnitude of 7.9 and shook San Francisco to the ground, destroying 80 percent of the city and resulted in 3,000 deaths.

A massive earthquake registering 8.2 was registered on Sunday, hitting 174 miles north-northeast of Ndoi Island, Fiji, according to the the USGS. Luckily, the massive quake did not cause any significant damage, hitting at a depth of 347.7 miles, too deep to cause a tsunami.

“We are monitoring the situation and some places felt it, but it was a very deep earthquake,” Director Apete Soro told Reuters in an interview.

## **CALIFORNIA MEGA-EARTHQUAKE FEAR: IS THE SAN ANDREAS FAULT AT RISK OF THE ‘BIG ONE?’**

### **The Ring of Fire**

The Ring of Fire is a 25,000 mile horseshoe-shaped ring, accounting for approximately 90 percent of the world’s earthquakes, according to the USGS.

The region also contains 452 volcanoes, more than 75 percent of the world’s active and dormant volcanoes.

Though the USGS did not issue a warning, the recent spat of earthquakes in the Ring of Fire could eventually cause some problems for the western part of the U.S. and other close regions.

Speaking with Vox in February, University of California Santa Cruz professor Emily Brodsky said “earthquakes and volcanoes can interact,” before adding it’s unclear how much the string of earthquakes we’ve seen in recent months are connected. Brodsky also said that having quakes and volcanic eruptions at the same time in an active area is not unusual.

## **SCIENTISTS FIND DOZENS OF HIDDEN EARTHQUAKES BURIED UNDER ANTARCTICA’S ICE**

In late July, a string of recent earthquakes off the West Coast of the U.S., ranging from 2.8 to 5.6 on the Richter scale, also raised questions of whether the “Big One” could be near.

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Source: <http://www.foxnews.com/science/2018/08/22/big-one-talk-swirls-as-69-massive-earthquakes-hit-pacifics-ring-fire-in-48-hours.html>

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