

FAQs

Or, *What Did I Get Myself Into?*

What is this thing? This field trip is funded by the US Geological Survey (USGS) through the National Earthquake Hazards Reduction Program (NEHRP) [pronounced “NEE hurp”]. The overall purpose is to reduce earthquake risk by educating key leaders in public policy and in the private sector (you) and enlisting their (your) help.

Why should I go? Geoscientists have long recognized the very real risk of earthquakes in the central US, and engineers know how to design structures to resist earthquakes. Unfortunately, a lot of new development in the central US still does not consider earthquake hazards during site selection, and a lot of new construction does not include earthquake-resistant design. As a result, much of the built environment is at high risk from earthquakes. This field trip is an opportunity for the leadership community to recognize this gap between *what we know about earthquakes* and *what we do about them* – and take action to close it. Lives and property are at stake.

Where are we going? This field trip starts and ends in St. Louis, Mo. Along the way there will be several stops and side trips. The route includes the St. Louis metro area, both in Missouri and in Illinois.

What will we see? We will visit

- 1) a university research center, where research on central-US earthquakes is in progress;
- 2) urban neighborhoods that have a lot of high-risk, unreinforced masonry buildings;
- 3) developed areas that will have more intense ground-shaking during future earthquakes than other areas (due to the underlying geology);
- 4) engineering solutions that minimize earthquake risk to some critical structures;
- 5) a large structure damaged during the April 18, 2008, Mt. Carmel mag 5.2 earthquake [planned]; and
- 6) levees, pipelines, bridges, heavy industry, and new developments that are at higher earthquake-risk than surrounding areas (again, due to the underlying geology).

The geoscientists and engineers who are doing this work will present their story to the group and will join us for one-on-one discussions. Finally, and maybe most importantly, we’ll recognize industrial operations; markets; infrastructure; resources; assets; and logistics, transportation, communication systems that are exposed to high earthquake risk that is *generally unrecognized*. By the end of the trip, participants will be able to spot and better understand *earthquake hazards* as well as *earthquake risks* – and the tools available to manage them.

Is this the first field trip of its kind? This is the sixth *Earthquake Insight Field Trip* since June 2005. The full report on the first one can be viewed at <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/research/external/reports/05HQGR0014.pdf> . There are now about 200 *Earthquake Insight Field Trip* faculty and alumni from all over the US. We haven’t lost anyone yet.

How much does it cost? The cost to each participant is \$65. This covers only a part of the actual costs of development, presentations, logistics, and consumables. The US Geological Survey generously subsidizes much of the cost.

Who’s in charge? Phyllis Steckel, a registered geologist, is the field trip leader. Phyllis received a grant from the USGS for proactive outreach on earthquake risk and how to manage that risk. She has been involved in earthquake risk reduction in the central US for almost 25 years.

What can I expect? Remember, this is a *field* trip, so we’ll be *in the field* for part of it – and no whining, please. If it rains, it will be wet. If it doesn’t rain, it will be dry. It may be cool and windy. It may be warm and muggy. It might even be clear and pleasant – but don’t count on it. And at some of the stops we may walk some distance, so if mobility is an issue, please contact Phyllis (636-239-4013) as soon as possible.

What about transportation? Transportation is provided round-trip from the Hampton Inn Forest Park in St. Louis, Mo. (5650 Oakland Avenue); via an air-conditioned motor coach equipped with an intercom and a restroom. Near the end of the field trip, we’ll stop at a MetroLink station so those who will fly home from St. Louis Lambert International Airport can save a little time *and* a cab fare.

There will be at least one escort vehicle that accompanies the motor coach. The escort vehicle is only available for shuttling speakers and field trip supplies and for use if someone must leave the field trip due to illness or other emergency.

How about lodging and meals? A block of rooms has been reserved for Wednesday night, May 27, at the Hampton Inn Forest Park; for reservations, call the hotel (at 1-314-655-3993; don’t go online) and tell the clerk you are with the *Earthquake Insight* group. These hotel rooms will be released from the block on Friday, May 1. **The cost of the hotel \$109 (plus tax) is not included in**

your field-trip registration. This Hampton Inn's website is:

<http://hamptoninn.hilton.com/en/hp/hotels/index.jhtml;jsessionid=1GPREPUDBMUG0CSGBJN2VCQ?ctyhocn=STLHLHX>

Other nearby hotels include the Drury Inn Forest Park (<http://www.druryhotels.com/properties/forestpark.cfm>) and the Holiday Inn Forest Park/Hampton (http://www.ichotelsgroup.com/h/d/hi/1/en/hotel/stlfp?_requestid=377638).

Also, if you will need lodging for Thursday night, May 28, please **make these arrangements on your own**.

An informal, picnic lunch is included on Thursday. Juice, snacks, and soft drinks will be available at breaks, and bottled water will be available at all times. If a special diet is required, please contact Phyllis (636-239-4013) as soon as possible. If you have significant diet constraints – such as strict kosher, vegan, or severe allergies – you may want to bring a few staples to tide you over just in case.

Who else is going? *Earthquake Insight Field Trips* are especially for non-scientists, such as business leaders, elected officials, media, finance and equity professionals, risk managers, portfolio managers, lenders, business continuity planners, and others in similar responsible positions. There are about 200 alumni of past *Earthquake Insight Field Trips*, from all over the country: Texas, Ohio, California, New York, Minnesota, Georgia, Arkansas, Connecticut, Iowa, Colorado, Rhode Island, Pennsylvania, Kentucky, and, of course, Missouri and Illinois. Participants have represented State Farm, Pfizer, FM Global, the Missouri State Senate, Odyssey Re, Dillard's, Wal-Mart, Chubb, AON, AG Edwards, ABC/Disney, General Re, Time-Warner, Edward Jones, The Republic Group, Shelter Insurance, St. Paul/Travelers, Enbridge, Swiss Re, and many others.

Who will we meet? Along the way, we'll meet with geoscientists, engineers, and others who are working on the earthquake risk issue in the central US. Some are involved in research, some are in the public sector, and some are in private practice. A dozen or so will accompany the group on the field trip. There will be plenty of time for one-on-one discussions.

What should I wear? Wear comfortable, closed shoes (not sandals) and comfortable long pants. The dress code is informal: jeans and tennies are fine. Depending on the forecast, bring a jacket and a rain poncho. Geoscientists are among the world's worst dressers, so just about anything you wear will be better than that of your hosts.

What to bring? Definitely bring cameras and extra batteries. Muted cell phones are welcome during the breaks, although coverage may be marginal in some areas. At some of the field sites, there may be insects, poison oak, bright sun, and allergens. Bring a day pack with rain gear, sunscreen, sunglasses, and allergy meds. And most importantly, please don't forget your generous good humor!

What should I expect? Expect camaraderie; new contacts; personal growth; insight; perspective; and knock-your-socks-off relevant, usable information. You may get ideas to solve a problem you didn't know you had. And you may even *enjoy* yourself.

When will we get back? Depending on Thursday-afternoon traffic in St. Louis, we should be back to the Hampton Inn Forest Park by 6:00 pm. For those leaving from St. Louis Lambert International Airport, we will make a drop-off at a MetroLink station. Travel from this station to the St. Louis airport takes about an hour on the public light-rail system. See www.metrostlouis.org/ for more information.

What about registration? As you can imagine, there is a lot of planning for each *Earthquake Insight Field Trip*. Unfortunately, on the previous field trip, numerous participants signed up for the event without making a personal commitment to attend. Their last-minute cancellations were a significant, negative impact to the already-too-thin budget. As a result, there is a new registration protocol.

Your registration will be finalized when payment is received AND there are at least 25 participants (i.e. payment has been received from at least 25 participants). Seats are assigned in the order that payment is received – not in the order of inquiry. As a result, payment checks will be held (but not deposited) until payments from at least 25 participants are received. → As of April 27, enough payments have been received to make this *Earthquake Insight Field Trip* a “GO.”

Because many of the expenses for this field trip are paid up-front and are non-refundable, once your payment is received, no refunds are possible. However, substitutions are allowed at any time, even up until the morning of departure. Participants should line up an alternate to take their spot when they register.

Is there anything else? If you really want to participate, don't wait: please start the registration process now.

I still have some questions. How do I get answers? Contact Phyllis Steckel at 636-239-4013 or psteckel@charter.net.

I'm already sold. How do I sign up? Contact Phyllis Steckel at 636-239-4013 or psteckel@charter.net.