

JAMAICA'S VULNERABILITY TO EARTHQUAKES

Records of earthquakes in Jamaica date back to the 16th century where Europeans were the first to keep records of such events.

It has been pointed out that Jamaica may experience up to two hundred (200) felt earthquakes in any one year. From 1667 to 1888 at least 55 earthquakes of intensity IV on the Modified Mercalli Scale have occurred in Jamaica and since 1776 we have had nine earthquakes of intensity VII, enough to cause damage to stone buildings.

Earthquake activity in Jamaica is a direct result of various types of movements taking place within boundary zones of the Caribbean Plate.

Jamaica is situated near the northern edge of the Caribbean Plate which is thought to be moving in an east-north easterly direction with respect to the North American Plate.