

## Seismologists have recorded 900 quakes

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According to the latest information from the Yellowstone Volcano Observatory, about 900 earthquakes occurred between Dec. 26 and Jan. 8 in the Yellowstone Lake area.

Five hundred of the quakes have been reviewed by seismologists. There were 111 earthquakes with magnitudes greater than 2.0 and 18 earthquakes greater than 3.0. About 400 smaller earthquakes have yet to be reviewed.

The largest earthquake during the swarm, on Dec. 28, was of magnitude 3.9. One of the measurements that seismologists use to talk about earthquakes and swarms is the cumulative seismic moment, which is a measure of the earthquake energy. The cumulative moment (the energy from all the analyzed earthquakes in the swarm) for the Yellowstone Lake Swarm is equal to the energy of a single magnitude 4.5 earthquake.

Earthquakes with magnitudes less than 3.4 are generally not felt by people unless the quakes are very shallow, and then only close to the epicenter. For perspective, earthquakes of magnitude 3.4 to 4.5 are often felt and there were multiple reports of felt earthquakes during this swarm. A magnitude 5 or greater is generally required to cause damage to buildings or other structures.

For more information, visit the observatory's Web site at [volcanoes.usgs.gov/yvo/](http://volcanoes.usgs.gov/yvo/).

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