

## New discovery threatens a seismic shift in LA

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Earthquake liquifaction damage to apartment.

USGS/Ft. Collins, CO

**American scientists at the Southern California Earthquake Centre (SCEC) have discovered a potentially lethal fault line beneath Los Angeles.**

The discovery of the fault isn't new in itself, only the scientists now know its true destructive potential. The fault is about 30 miles long and is found in the Puente Hills region of downtown LA. It was formed by the collision of the Pacific and North American plates and was discovered only four years ago.

Scientists used evidence from rock cores extracted from along the fault line to piece together its eruption history. The results of this show the Puente Hills fault to be one of the largest of the 100 faults that cross the Los Angeles region. Scientists believe that it dissipates its energy in frequent small earthquakes. However, they also found that the fault was capable of a huge quake of over 7.2 on the Richter scale every

2000 years.

Such an earthquake would devastate modern day Los Angeles as most of the buildings can only withstand quakes of around 5 on the Richter scale. Huge earthquakes of over 7.0 would be at least 1000 times stronger than this. A spokesperson for the US Geological Survey stated this was potentially devastating news for Los Angeles.