

THE NATION'S NEWSPAPER

# USA TODAY

NO. 1 IN THE USA . . . FIRST IN DAILY READERS

USA TODAY FRIDAY, MAY 20, 1994

## 'Earthquakes' may rattle folks far from the West Coast

By Alan Bash  
USA TODAY

Graceland, all shook up. That's the scenario put forth on ABC's *World of Discovery* special Saturday (8 p.m. ET/PT), in which geology experts predict a large-scale earthquake to rock Elvis' final resting place sometime in the next 50 years.

Memphis is, after all, the big city closest to an earthquake

zone in the central U.S., says Kaye Shedlock of the U.S. Geological Survey. With a magnitude 6 quake on the Richter scale, "Graceland would shake from side to side, (sink) about an inch, but weather it fairly well," she says. Other parts of town might not be so lucky.

In true-to-sweeps form, *Earthquakes: The Terrifying Truth*, hosted by Martin Sheen, seeks to shatter the belief that only the West Coast has to fear

the movement of the earth. "It's a myth that the East Coast is immune," says Hofstra University's Charles Merguerian, who appears on the special. Merguerian says a big quake tends to hit the Big Apple about every 120 years, with the last one coming in 1884.

The special features footage from January's quake in Southern California, interspersed with Hollywood's big-screen versions of the Big One — may-

hem in the streets, the letters on the Hollywood sign peeling off the mountain.

"It's certainly on the high-impact end," says geologist Alan Lindh of the one-hour documentary. Lindh, — who also weighs in during the show — says that although the documentary may be a bit alarmist, he's happy it will at least "be a wake-up call" to the country's central and eastern regions.

People can do simple things

to prepare for a quake, he says. "If you've got a children's room, you should attach (standing bookcases) to the walls; your kids should know to get under the table; they should know where the gas-shutoff valves are."

Viewers, though, shouldn't lose sleep over an impending Big One, says Lindh. "They've got tornados and hurricanes and crime on the streets to worry about."