

Natural Disasters

Avalanche

An avalanche is a mass of snow, ice, and rocks that falls rapidly down a mountainside. Avalanches kill more than 150 people every year. Most of them are snowmobilers, skiers, and snowboarders.



Blizzard

Blizzards are severe winter storms characterized by a lot of snow and strong winds. In 1993, an enormous blizzard killed over 300 people across the USA and Canada.



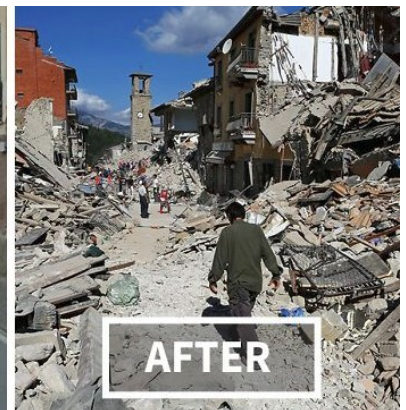
Drought

Drought is caused by levels of rainfall that are significantly below average over a long period. Hot dry wind, lack of rain and high temperatures, all contribute to a drought. Droughts generally result in crop failures and a lack of drinking water.



Earthquake

An earthquake is the result of a sudden release of energy in the Earth's crust that creates vibration and displacement of the ground. Earthquakes are caused by slippage within geological faults. Earthquakes rarely kill people. The secondary events are more dangerous - building collapses, fires, tsunamis and volcanoes.



Flood

A flood is the temporary cover of land by water, usually caused by excessive rain. A flood usually occurs when the volume of water in a river or lake becomes too much and it overflows. A tsunami can also cause a flood.



Hailstorm

Hail is frozen rain. Hailstorms can cause a lot of damage to cars and property. In Munich, Germany, on July 12th, 1984, a hailstorm caused about \$2 billion of damage.



Heat Wave

A heat wave is a period of excessively hot weather. The summer of 2010 in the Northern Hemisphere resulted in many severe heat waves, which killed over 2,000 people. There were hundreds of wild fires and thousands of square miles of forest were destroyed.



Landslide/Mudslide

A landslide is the movement of materials down a hill or mountain. The materials can include rocks, stones, soil, mud and vegetation. It is often the result of heavy rain on a loose topsoil. Often, people living in these areas lose their homes and sometimes their lives.



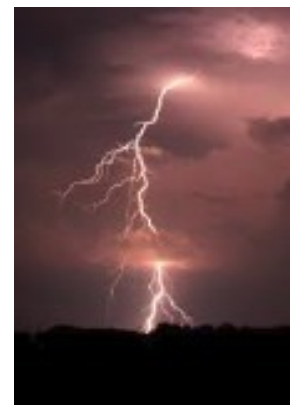
Sinkhole

When natural erosion or human mining makes the ground too weak to support the structures built on it, the ground can collapse and produce a sinkhole. For example, in 2010 in Guatemala City, a sinkhole killed fifteen people. It was caused by heavy rain which entered a pumice bedrock, and subsequently caused the collapse of the ground under a factory.



Thunderstorm

Thunderstorms are storms which generate "lightning". They can result from rain storms, dust clouds and volcanic eruptions. Lightning can damage buildings, create fires and kill people. Notable lightning incidents include a strike in 2007 in Pakistan, which killed 30 people, the crash of LANSA Flight 508, which killed 91 people in 1971, and a fuel explosion in Dronka, Egypt, caused by lightning in 1994, which killed 469 people. Lightning is most common in South America, particularly Chile, Venezuela and Brazil.



Tornado

A tornado is a violent rotating column of air that is in contact with the surface of the earth. It is also called a "twister". Most tornadoes are small and dissipate quickly. The most extreme tornadoes can attain wind speeds of more than 480 km/h, be more than 3 km wide, and stay on the ground for more than 100 km.



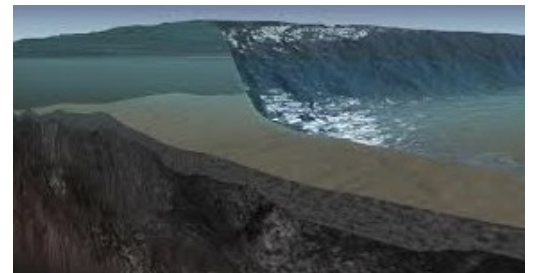
Tropical Storm

Hurricanes, cyclones and typhoons are all types of tropical storms. Hurricanes are storms that form over the North Atlantic Ocean and Northeast Pacific. Cyclones are formed over the South Pacific and Indian Ocean (Australasia). Typhoons are formed over the Northwest Pacific Ocean (Asia). Tropical storms are given names and can last for many days.



Tsunami

A tsunami (from Japanese: "harbour wave") is also called a "seismic sea wave" or "tidal wave". It is a series of waves caused by the displacement of a large volume of water. Tsunamis can be caused by undersea earthquakes, landslides or volcanic eruptions.



Volcano

A "volcanic eruption" occurs when hot materials are thrown out of a volcano. They include lava, rocks, dust, ash and gases. Eruptions can come from the side of a volcano or from the top. Some eruptions are violent explosions that throw out large amounts of rock and volcanic ash and can kill many people. Some eruptions are quiet outflows of hot lava.



Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Natural_disaster