

Elon students return to normalcy after quake

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Zale's host family's home sustained no damages, but their neighborhood, like many in Santiago, has yet to regain power. While Santiago suffered minimal amounts of structural damage, the power outages have severely restricted travel and communication within the city. Many traffic lights are not functioning, making it dangerous to drive.

Although Santiago was spared the brunt of the earthquake, there were still cases of severe damage throughout the city.

Rafael Rocco and Patricia Montecina were jolted out of bed not only by the immense shaking from the earthquake, but also from the sound of the collapse of their apartment complex's two story parking garage.

The garage, located in Las Condes, a suburban neighborhood within the city, contained about 56 cars at the time of its collapse. All were completely destroyed.

"The shaking from this earthquake was like nothing I have ever experienced," Rocco said. "There have been earthquakes here before, but nothing like this during this time period. These buildings have survived many earthquakes, but this one was just too much."

The center of Santiago, home to many historical buildings, was the most damaged by the earthquake. Older government buildings and churches suffered serious structural damage, and one of the oldest churches in Santiago lost its bell tower.

Despite these examples, because of the frequency of smaller earthquakes in Chile, all new buildings are subject to strict height and safety restrictions, meaning most people suffered little property damage in Santiago, unlike Concepción where virtually every building in the city was somehow damaged.

Angélica Zelaya, a retired secretary living in Las Condes, explained that for many, the power outages were both the most terrifying and the most dangerous aspect of the quake.

"I was very scared and was trying to get to a safe place," Zelaya said. "But what made the situation so much worse was the lack of light. No one could see anything, no one could get outside, no one could leave where they were."

Like many other Santiaguinos, Zelaya's apartment regained power within several hours.

"We have water here, and food and electricity," she said. "We are so fortunate here in Santiago, we can only hope and pray for those in other parts of the country."

Reporter's note: The interviews were conducted in Spanish and then translated for this story. Fendt is a junior at Elon studying in Chile this semester.



LINDSAY FENDT | Photographer
Workers began repairing sidewalks and walls several hours after the earthquake struck. While there was little severe damage in Santiago, many older houses lost garden walls and paths.



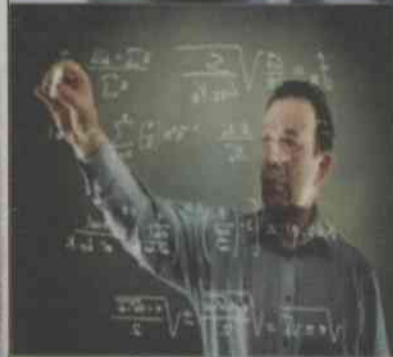
LINDSAY FENDT | Photographer
Santiaguinos stand outside as a precaution after Saturday's earthquake. Aftershocks rocked the country for hours.



LINDSAY FENDT | Photographer
The ceiling of a parking garage in a Santiago neighborhood collapsed during the earthquake. The 56 cars that were inside the garage were all damaged beyond repair, and the surrounding buildings suffered structural damage.



LINDSAY FENDT | Photographer
Supermarkets in Santiago were heavily guarded following the chaotic rushes of people trying to get food and water. In Concepción, Chile, where most of the damage occurred, many of the supermarkets were looted.



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