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Information Seeking

Icelandic Met Office 48 Hour Earthquake Data

Icelandic Metrological Office (2016). Whole country – earthquakes during the last 48 hours [Dataset]. Date accessed September 14, 2016. Retrieved from http://en.vedur.is/earthquakes-and-volcanism/earthquakes#view=table

Users are free to use data on this web-site; however, if the data are used for presentation or publication, reference must be made to the Icelandic Meteorological Office. The terms and conditions are listed here: http://en.vedur.is/about-imo/the-web/conditions.

Located on the Mid-Atlantic ridge, Iceland experiences geological activity such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. To monitor potential volcanic eruptions, the Icelandic Metrological Office records the longitude/latitude, depth, magnitude, and relative distance to known volcanoes of earthquakes. This information is released publically every 48 hours. This dataset is interesting presently because the volcano Katla, which is overdue for an eruption, is experiencing increases in earthquake activity. It would be interesting to monitor the depth, magnitude, and frequency of earthquake activity as the Met Office monitors Katla. This dataset is also interesting because it requires the user to frequently download the latest information releases, improving their data management skills.

Data Users

Icelandic Citizens

Geologists

Volcanologists

Icelandic Government

Research Questions

Can volcanoes be predicted by monitoring the depth, magnitude, and frequency of earthquakes?

What is the relationship between depth and magnitude?

Is a Katla volcano eruption imminent?

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Montgomery County of Maryland Traffic Violations

Montgomery County of Maryland (2016). Traffic Violations. [Dataset]. Date accessed September 14, 2016. Retrieved from http://catalog.data.gov/dataset/traffic-violations-56dda

Users are free to use the Montgomery County of Maryland datasets because datasets created for local and federal government are intended for public access and use. The Montgomery County of Maryland does not provide a license; however, users are required to read the Terms of Use and User Rights. Terms of Use are available at https://data.montgomerycountymd.gov/terms-of-use and the User Rights are available at http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/mcg/user_rights.html.

This dataset records the traffic violations issued in Montgomery County. Data recorded includes the type of vehicle, the type of violation, the city, and the demographic information regarding the individual. Integrated with violations from other counties, this data tells interesting stories regarding the types of cars and individuals police officers pull over. For example, it would be interesting to compare traffic violations in Montgomery County and Prince Georges County. The data are also important because they relate to important questions surrounding discrimination and the recent police killings of black men and women.

Data Users

Montgomery County Residents

Social Justice Workers

Department of Justice Employees

Police Departments

Research Questions

Are Black and Hispanic drivers targeted more than white drivers?

Do older cars receive more traffic violations than newer cars?

How does traffic violations in Montgomery County compare to other counties in Maryland?

Word Count: 686

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NGDC/WDS Tsunami Event Database

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (2016). National Geophysical Data Center / World Data Service (NGDC/WDS): Global Historical Tsunami Database [Dataset] Date accessed September 14, 2016. Retrieved from doi:10.7289/V5PN93H7

Users are free to use the Tsunami Database as the data was created and recorded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, a government organization that must adhere to the open data laws and policy. I was unable to locate a specific license; however, the Privacy Policy states, "Information presented on these web pages is considered public information and may be distributed or copied." The Privacy Policy can be found here: https://www.ngdc.noaa.gov/ngdcinfo/privacy.html#disclaimer.

This dataset records information on tsunami events from 2000 B.C. to the present. Specifically, it focuses on the Atlantic, Indian, and Pacific Oceans, as well as the Mediterranean and Caribbean Seas. Data include the location, date, time, magnitude, water height and the number of deaths, injuries, and damagers associated with the tsunami. This data set is interesting because geological equipment and monitoring devices did not exist in 2000 BC. As a result, the data were supplied by oral stories or individual accounts describing the event. This data has the potential to be dirty and incomplete.

Data Users

Local/Coastal Governments

Geologists

Hydrologists / Oceanographers

Research Questions

What data will best inform civil and mechanical engineers to design houses to prevent destruction during tsunamis?

What data will best inform local coastal governments to reduce deaths and increase evacuation rates?

What locations are most prone to mega-tsunamis?

Word Count: 686