

## Washington Monument To Reopen Today After Being Closed Nearly Three Years

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After nearly three years of being closed for repairs to fix cracks the Washington Monument sustained from a 2011 earthquake, the iconic monolith was scheduled to reopen to the public today.

The Mineral, Virginia, earthquake that occurred on August 23, 2011, may not have been huge by California standards, but the magnitude 5.8 quake was powerful enough to do millions of dollars worth of damages. Although the quake did not render the 555-foot monument structurally unsound, the shaking caused serious damage. An engineering report released by the National Park Service in December 2011 documented numerous components or areas of the monument that were impacted by cracking, chipping, spalling, displacement, shearing, and other defects that will have to be fixed at considerable expense.

The overall cost of the repair project was estimated to be around \$15 million. Congress approved \$7.5 million for the repairs, stipulating that an equal amount must be raised from nongovernment sources. On January 19, 2012, the Department of the Interior, the National Park Service, and the Trust for the National Mall jointly announced a \$7.5 million matching gift from philanthropist David M. Rubenstein. Rubenstein, a billionaire, co-founded The Carlyle Group, a huge American-based firm engaged in global alternative asset management.



If you can't visit the monument today, or anytime soon, check out this hand-edited time-lapse movie, documenting the Washington Monument restoration. The video was produced by [EarthCam](#), which documented crews working to restore this national treasure. Thousands of images were captured from March 2013 to April 2014 and were expertly edited into this [80-second time-lapse movie](#).

In conjunction with the reopening of the monument, the Trust for the National Mall is sponsoring A Monumental Fourth Contest to bring a family of four to Washington, D.C., for the Fourth of July.

The contest requires you to share what the National Mall means to you, as a place for historic gatherings and reflection, and as our country's most-visited national park. To enter the contest, you have to go to the Trust's Facebook page and answer the question, "What does the National Mall mean to you?" And you can upload a photo or video, if you have an appropriate one. The contest was launched this morning, and runs through the end of the month.