Giant sinkhole shocks neighborhood in Guatemala City - CNN.com

From Helena de Moura , CNN
June 2, 2010 11:01 a.m. EDT

CNN.com

(CNN) -- Residents of a center-city neighborhood in Guatemala City, Guatemala, are still in shock after a massive sinkhole opened last weekend, gobbling several buildings and nearly an entire intersection, according to local officials.

Over the weekend, the nearly perfect cylindrical crater developed and consumed whatever was on its surface, including structures and utility lines. There were no reports of deaths related to the sinkhole.

The 20-meter (about 66 feet) diameter sinkhole is about 30 meters (about 100 feet) deep.

The size and shape of the crater led some of the more than 1,000 readers posting comments on the story on CNN.com to debate how it could have formed and whether it was even real.

According to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), sinkholes are common where the rock below the land surface is limestone, carbonate rock, salt beds or rocks that can naturally be dissolved by ground water circulating through them.

One local resident believes ground water has something to do with the sinkhole.

In 2007, another sinkhole claimed three lives in Barrio San Antonio in Guatemala City.

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