



California Tsunami Preparedness Handout

Find out if you live, work, or play in a tsunami hazard area:

- Visit <http://tsunamimaps.ca.gov> to find out where tsunami hazard areas occur.
- Check your county's emergency services web site for evacuation routes for your community.
- If you are located just outside of a tsunami hazard area,

consider working with your community to see what kind of assistance you might be able to provide for those that are in a tsunami hazard area and will need to relocate.

Know the Warning Signs

- An earthquake in your area is one of nature's tsunami warning signals. Do not stay in low-lying coastal areas after a strong earthquake has been felt.
- Tsunamis are sometimes preceded by a noticeable receding of sea level as the ocean retreats seaward exposing the seafloor. A roar like an oncoming train may sometimes be heard as the tsunami wave rushes toward the shore.
- A tsunami is not a single wave, but a series of waves. Stay out of danger areas until an "all-clear" is issued by competent authority.

Understand how your community will broadcast emergency information

- Tsunami warnings may be by radio, television, telephone, text message, door-to-door contact, NOAA weather radios, outdoor sirens.
- During a tsunami emergency, your local civil defense, police, and other emergency organizations will try to save your life. Give them your fullest cooperation.
- All warnings to the public must be taken very seriously, even if some are for non-destructive events. The tsunami of May 1960 killed 61 people in Hilo, Hawaii because some thought it was just another false alarm.

Have an Evacuation Plan

- Know your evacuation routes - look for the blue and white tsunami evacuation signs along the coast.
- Assemble a small evacuation kit (essential documents, medications, flashlight, portable NOAA weather radio and batteries, water, snack, warm clothes, silver "space blanket).
- Make a reunification plan with your family. Decide when and where you will meet if you are separated. Designate an out of state relative or friend for the individuals in your family to call if it is not possible to meet at your reunification spot.
- Make plans for how to address any needs or disabilities you might have.

Practice Tsunami Evacuation Drills

- Identify if there is an evacuation plan in place for your site. Contact your building manager, school district, city or county offices to find out the recommended procedures.
- If there is no evacuation plan in place, learn what the recommended tsunami evacuation routes are in your city, county and region. Some cities and counties have this information available online. Identify safety zone(s) near you, and plan your primary and secondary evacuation routes.
- Identify what your evacuation destination will be (school, church, parking lot).
- Prior to an evacuation drill, walk your evacuation route. Make sure there are no potential hazards that may prevent your staff/students/family from using this evacuation route safely.
- Coordinate in advance to have volunteer groups (from non evacuation areas) serve refreshments to evacuation drill participants. After the drill, have a safety fair planned: invite local emergency response groups, learn emergency preparedness skills, distribute tsunami and earthquake preparedness information.
- For school evacuation drills, plan for interactive educational tsunami activities at the relocation area. Provide a snack. Have a guest speaker.

Contact other Emergency Response Groups in Your Area

- Consider joining your Community Emergency Response Team: <https://www.ready.gov/cert>
- Find out if other organizations, agencies, or schools in your area are participating in a tsunami drill. Even if you are in an area that does not require evacuation, volunteer to work at relocation sites, comfort stations, or animal care facilities in your area. Learn what the potential needs of your community might be.
- Share ideas and coordinate resources. For example, your elementary school may need to evacuate to another school, church, or business; coordinate with them to work out details such as how to enter the site and where to assemble.

Important Online Resources

- TsunamiZone California <https://www.tsunamizone.org/california/>
- Cal OES MyHazards <https://myhazards.caloes.ca.gov/>
- California Geological Survey Tsunami Hazard Area Maps <http://tsunami.ca.gov>
- Redwood Coast Tsunami Work Group <https://rctwg.humboldt.edu/>