

Talking Points regarding the Tsunami Warning Test and Tsunami Preparedness

WHEN: Wednesday, March 24, 2021, between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 Noon

WHERE: Del Norte, Humboldt, and Mendocino Counties.

HOW: Interruptions of TV* and Radio Stations, Civil Air Patrol broadcasts, and activation of NOAA Weather Radios and Outdoor Sirens in some areas. **Not all Cable and Satellite TV Stations may be able to participate*

WHY: To test the Tsunami Warning System to ensure it works properly during a real tsunami emergency.

1. **Official Warnings.** The annual Tsunami Warning Test is focused on a tsunami coming from far away. If you hear that an official tsunami warning has been issued, move away from the beach and out of harbor areas and seek more information without using the phone. Tune into local radio or television stations for more information. Follow the directions of emergency personnel who may ask you to evacuate low lying coastal areas.
2. **Natural Warnings.** If a very long earthquake occurs close to our coast (20 seconds or longer), there will be no time for an official warning to be issued. You must rely on recognizing the natural warning signs of a tsunami. An earthquake is the most likely natural warning sign that a tsunami is coming. Other natural warning signs include the ocean water moving far out exposing the sea floor, or hearing an unusually loud roar from the coast. If you are in a tsunami evacuation zone and observe any of these natural warnings, move to higher ground or inland as soon as it is safe to do so. There may be as little as 10 minutes between the earthquake and tsunami. The Great California Shakeout on October 21st at 10:21 am is a good time to practice your locally felt earthquake-tsunami plan.
3. **Don't Wait.** Respond to whichever type of warning – natural or official - you get first. Don't wait for an official warning if you feel a large earthquake!
4. **Know Your Zone.** Know if you are in the tsunami zone where you live, work, play, and travel. Use tsunami hazard zone signs and tsunami evacuation maps to recognize safe and potentially hazardous areas. If there are no maps or signs in your area, plan to go to an area 100 feet above sea level or 2 miles inland (note that the 100 feet is extreme overkill).
5. **Go on Foot.** If you evacuate, go by foot if possible. An earthquake may damage roads and bridges and heavy traffic may cause gridlock and limit your access to a safe area.
6. **When in Doubt; Drill it out.** If you observe any of the natural warnings, but especially a long earthquake, and you are not sure if there is a threat of a tsunami, go ahead and evacuate to high ground. If it turns out that there is not a tsunami then you can just think of your evacuation as a very realistic drill.
7. **Prepare.** This is a good opportunity to find out more about preparing for earthquakes, tsunamis or any other disaster on the North Coast. Review the online version of the preparedness magazine "Living on Shaky Ground" are at www.humboldt.edu/shakyground.