

HUMBOLDT COUNTY'S TSUNAMI RISK

A tsunami is a series of waves or surges usually caused by an earthquake beneath the sea floor. Tsunamis can cause great loss of life and property damage where they come ashore.

- **The first wave is almost never the largest**
- **Successive waves may be spaced ten or more minutes apart and continue arriving for many hours**

You may find out that a tsunami is coming in two ways:

Natural Warning

Strong ground shaking, a loud ocean roar, or the water receding unusually far exposing the sea floor, are all Nature's warnings that a tsunami may be coming. If you observe any of these natural warning signs, immediately move to higher ground or inland and as shown by the gray area on the map (reverse side). Stay away from low areas until told by emergency personnel that the danger has passed. A tsunami may arrive within minutes of any of these natural warning signs and may last for 8 hours or longer.

Official Warning

You may be notified that a Tsunami Warning has been issued by: TV and radio stations, door-to-door contact by emergency responders, NOAA weather radios, or in some cases, by outdoor sirens. Move away from the beach and seek more information without using a 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.

Both Natural and Official warnings are equally important. Respond to whatever you hear or observe first!

WHAT AREAS ARE AT RISK?

Beaches and low lying areas close to the coast such as lagoons, bays and river mouths are at greatest risk. The map on the reverse side shows areas you should leave after feeling strong earthquake ground shaking. In many areas, tsunami hazard zone signs have been posted. **If you are in a safe area, stay where you are.**

WHAT IF I AM OUTSIDE THE MAP AREA?

Go to an area 100 feet above sea level or 2 miles inland, away from the coast. If you cannot get this far, go as high as possible. Every foot inland or upwards can make a difference.

HOW DO I KNOW IF AN EARTHQUAKE IS BIG ENOUGH TO CAUSE A TSUNAMI?

Protect yourself during the earthquake.

- If you are on the beach and feel an earthquake, no matter how small, immediately move inland or to high ground.
- In other low lying areas, **COUNT** how long the earthquake lasts. If you count 20 seconds or more of very strong ground shaking and are located in a tsunami hazard zone, evacuate **as soon as it is safe to do so**.

GO ON FOOT. Roads and bridges may be damaged by strong ground shaking. If your only evacuation route is blocked by downed power lines, carefully cross without touching the lines.

If evacuation is impossible, go to the upper floor of a sturdy building or climb a tree — this should only be used as a last resort.

BE PREPARED

- Know the best evacuation route
- Walk your route – practice your route at night and in stormy weather
- Discuss emergency plans with family, coworkers and neighbors
- Consider how to evacuate pets – such as dogs on leashes and cats in crates
- Prearrange assistance from neighbors if you need help evacuating
- Take first aid and CPR training – learn more about disaster preparedness

Prepared by: Humboldt Earthquake Education Center, Humboldt State University for educational purposes only. ©Aug. 2008

TSUNAMI!

HOW TO SURVIVE THIS HAZARD IN HUMBOLDT COUNTY



**IN CASE OF EARTHQUAKE, GO
TO HIGH GROUND OR INLAND**

IF YOU FEEL A STRONG EARTHQUAKE:

- **Protect yourself during strong ground shaking**
Drop, cover and hold
- **Move to higher ground or inland as soon as it is safe to do so**
A tsunami may be coming

DO NOT WAIT FOR AN OFFICIAL WARNING

- **Stay away from the coast**
Waves may continue to arrive for 8 hours or longer
- **Do not leave high ground before an official "all clear"**
Listen to a radio for information

See map on other side for tsunami evacuation areas