

What is a tsunami?

A tsunami is a series of waves most commonly caused by an earthquake beneath the sea floor.

If a large earthquake displaces the sea floor near the Alaska coast, the first waves may reach the shore minutes after the ground stops shaking. There would be no time for authorities to issue a warning.

Following an earthquake far out

in the Pacific Ocean it may take hours for tsunami waves to reach the Alaska coast. The West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Center alerts local officials who may order an evacuation, but isolated areas may not receive officials announcements. If you notice a sudden drop or rise in sea level, it may be a warning of impending danger. Move to high ground or inland immediately.

The waves can kill and injure people and cause great property damage where they come ashore. The first wave is often not the largest; successive waves may be spaced several minutes apart and continue to arrive for several hours.

What should I do if an earthquake occurs while at the coast?

- Drop, cover and hold on until the shaking stops.
- Evacuate inland or to higher ground immediately. Do not wait for notification. Take your pets.
- Take your 7-day disaster supply kit.
- Listen to your local radio station or NOAA Weather Radio for information on shelter location and emergency broadcast.
- Beware of aftershocks.
- Do not return to the beach until local emergency officials give the "All Clear" notice.

Disaster Supply Kit

- Assemble in a 7-day minimum supply:
- First-aid supplies
- Personal prescriptions
- Pet supplies
- Non-perishable food and utensils
- Water (one gallon per person per day)
- Extra blankets, rain gear and clothing
- Plastic bags for garbage and waste
- Flashlights
- Battery-operated AM radio

Visit www.ready.alaska.org for a complete disaster kit list.

How do I know when to evacuate?

A strong offshore earthquake may generate a tsunami. Therefore, if you feel the ground shake or you hear the sirens sound, evacuate inland or to high ground immediately and return only after officials say it is safe to do so. During distant source tsunami events, local emergency management officials will advise citizens to evacuate by making an announcement over the Emergency Alert System or NOAA Weather Radio. Listen to your local radio stations for alerts.



Where do I evacuate?

Go to an area at least 50 feet above sea level. If possible follow the blue evacuation signs that will lead you in the right direction, out of the tsunami inundation zone. If you do not have time to travel to high ground, but are in a multi-story building, go to the uppermost level. If you are on the beach and unable to get to high ground, go inland as far as you can. If time allows take your disaster supply kit with you. The tsunami evacuation map illustrates the primary evacuation routes and congregation areas.

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How do I get inland or to high ground?

Go on foot if possible, particularly if an earthquake has caused damage to roads, power lines, and resulted in significant debris.

REMEMBER:

Never go to the coast to watch a tsunami. Tsunamis move faster than a person can run. If you are camping on or near the beach, you may have to abandon your campsite to go inland or to higher ground to save your life.

Do not return to shore after the first wave. Wait for Emergency Management officials to give the "All Clear" before you return.

If you see an unexpected rise or fall in the coastal water, a tsunami may be approaching. Do not wait—instead move inland or uphill as quickly as possible.

State tuned to your radio, marine radio or NOAA Weather Radio during a disaster. Bulletins will be issued regularly through Emergency Management officials and National Weather Service.

Call 9-1-1 only for life threatening emergencies.

Tsunami!

Evacuation Map and Safety Tips for Skagway, Alaska



