

What is a tsunami?

A tsunami is a series of sea waves usually caused by a displacement of the ocean floor by an undersea earthquake. As tsunamis enter shallow water near land, they increase in height and can cause great loss of life and property damage.

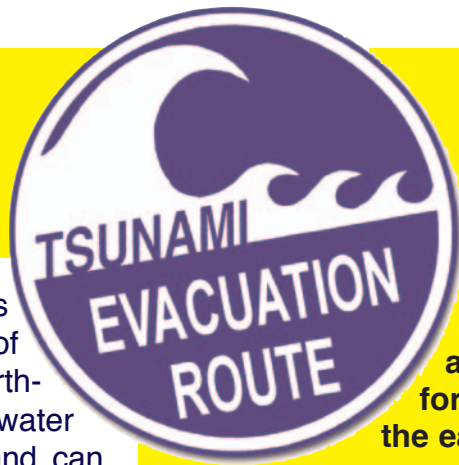
People on open beaches, in low-lying areas, by bay mouths or tidal flats, and near mouths of rivers draining into the ocean are in greatest danger from a tsunami.

Tsunamis can occur any time of day or night

Wave heights from tsunamis occurring in the Pacific over the last 80 years have been between 20 to 45 feet at the shoreline. A few waves however have been much higher—as much as 100 feet because of local conditions.



The tsunami that struck Hilo, Hawaii in 1960 was caused by an undersea earthquake near Chile and caused 61 deaths.



What should I do?

If you feel the ground start to shake, drop, cover and hold on if you are inside. If you are outside, watch for falling objects until the earthquake is over.

Immediately after the earthquake, move inland or to high ground, away from low lying areas. Evacuate on foot and grab your emergency kit as you leave.

Do not wait for an official warning because the tsunami may only be minutes away. Do not pack or delay.

Do not return to shore after the first wave. More waves may be coming, even hours later.

Wait for an “all clear” from local officials before returning to low lying areas.

Know the tsunami evacuation routes in your area. If you are visiting the coast, make sure you know how to get to high ground.

Remember, never go to the coast to watch a tsunami. Tsunamis move faster than a person can run.

Stay tuned to your radio, marine radio, NOAA weather radio, or television station during a tsunami emergency.

Put an emergency kit together

Assemble a three day supply of non-perishable food, water, medical supplies and clothes for each member of your family. Kits may be found at Salvation Army. Information on putting a kit together can be found at your local



library, sheriff's office, or by logging on to www.OregonGeology.com/emergencykit.htm

Two types of tsunamis

A distant tsunami caused by an undersea earthquake far from the Oregon coast will take several hours to come onshore. There will typically be time for an official warning and evacuation to safety.

For an earthquake near the coast, a tsunami could come onshore within 15 to 20 minutes after the earthquake, before there is time for official warning. The ground-shaking of the earthquake may be the only warning you get.



Destructive distant tsunamis have struck the Oregon coast from as far away as Alaska and Chile.



☞ If you feel the ground shake, drop, cover and hold – then move quickly to higher ground and safety.

☞ Do not pack or delay. Go on foot and grab your emergency kit as you leave.

☞ Do not wait for an official warning because the tsunami may only be minutes away.

☞ Do not return to shore after the first wave. More waves may be coming.

☞ Wait for an “all clear” from local officials before returning to low lying areas.



Tsunami evacuation maps are available for many coastal communities. Contact your local emergency services office or sheriff’s office for a free copy.

CONTACTS

Oregon Emergency Management
3225 State Street, P.O. Box 14370
Salem, OR 97309
(503) 378-2911
<http://egov.oregon.gov/OOHS/OEM/>

Oregon Department of Geology
and Mineral Industries
800 NE Oregon Street #28, Suite 965
Portland, OR 97232
(971) 673-1535
<http://www.oregongeology.com>

Nature of the Northwest Information Center
800 NE Oregon Street #5, Suite 177
Portland, OR 97232
(503) 872-2750
<http://www.naturenw.org/>

International Tsunami Information Centre
Box 50027
Honolulu, HI 96850-4993
(808) 541-1658
<http://www.tsunamiwave.info/>



Funded by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration under SO #OBLIG-2000-5332-0-0 through the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries. Published by the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries in cooperation with Oregon Emergency Management.

