

## EVACUATION SITES

Ground shaking from an earthquake may be the only warning you have of a local source tsunami. In the event of a strong earthquake do not wait for official instructions. Evacuate quickly to a safe area; then, listen to the radio for official information and instructions.

Some communities have identified tsunami evacuation sites. These are safe areas that you can quickly move to in the event of a local source tsunami. Evacuation sites are just safe areas and do not offer any logistical services. However, they can serve as an assembly point for families and neighbors.

In the event of a distance source tsunami, residents in the hazard areas will be instructed to go inland or to an official evacuation shelter and remain there until told it is safe to return. This could be several hours. Designated evacuation shelters include:

- Farallone View Elementary School
- Half Moon Bay High School
- Oceana High School
- Pescadero High School
- Terra Nova High School



Evacuation shelters will have basic logistical services. Remember that it will take some time for the shelter staff to arrive and get set to receive evacuees.



SAN MATEO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE  
OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

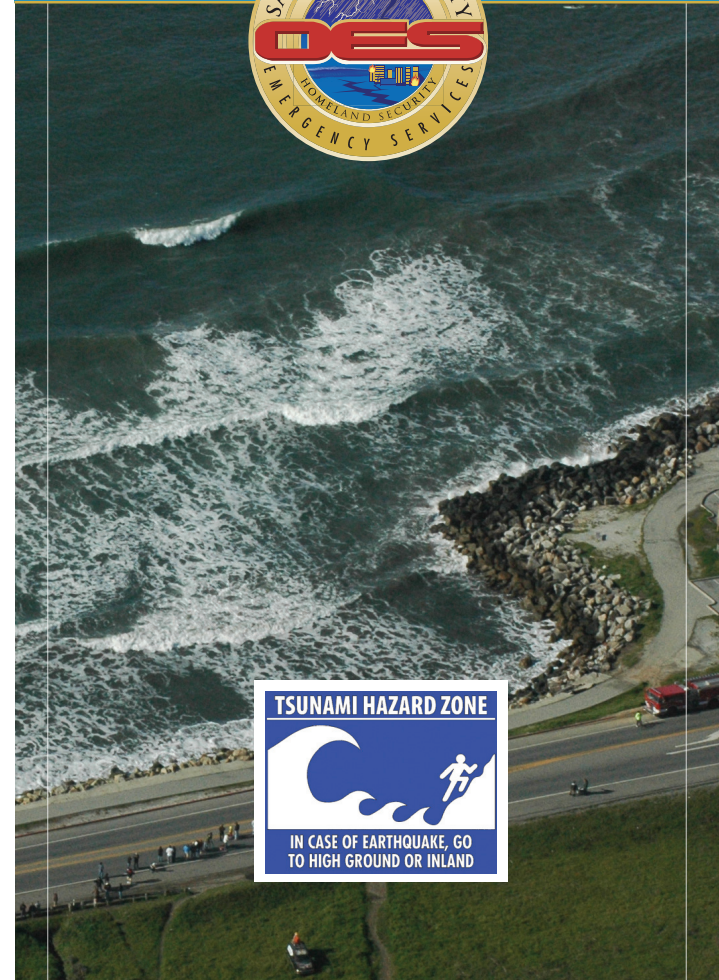
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[www.smcsheriff.com](http://www.smcsheriff.com)  
[www.smcready.org](http://www.smcready.org)  
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# TSUNAMI PREPAREDNESS

A GUIDE FOR COMMUNITIES IN  
SAN MATEO COUNTY





## WHAT IS A TSUNAMI?

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

We distinguish between a tsunami caused by a local seismic event, such as an undersea earthquake near the California coast (local source tsunami) and one that is generated in another area of the Pacific Ocean (distant source tsunami).

A LOCAL SOURCE TSUNAMI could come onshore within 15-20 minutes after a local earthquake—before there is time for an official warning from the tsunami warning center.

Ground shaking from the earthquake may be the only warning you have. In the event of a strong earthquake (strong enough to make it difficult to stand) evacuate quickly to a safe area!

A DISTANT SOURCE TSUNAMI may take several hours to reach our shore. A distant source tsunami would allow time for officials to issue an official tsunami warning and carry out an evacuation of the hazard areas.

## TSUNAMI WARNING SYSTEM

If a tsunami warning is issued, it will be announced over the Emergency Alert System (EAS) on commercial radios and televisions. It will also be sent over the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather, all-hazard radio system.

In some areas of the county, tsunami warning sirens are in place. If you hear a steady 3-minute siren, tune your radio to 740 AM or listen to your NOAA weather radio for official information.

A second system will send a warning in the form of a text message to cellular phones, email addresses, and pagers. You can sign up for this free service at [www.smcalert.info](http://www.smcalert.info) and follow the instructions for “new users”.

In isolated areas along the beaches of San Mateo County you may not hear any warning. A SUDDEN CHANGE IN SEA LEVEL such as a rapidly receding sea should prompt you to go to high ground or inland immediately. Then, listen to your radio, television, or NOAA weather radio for official information.



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
CONTACT:

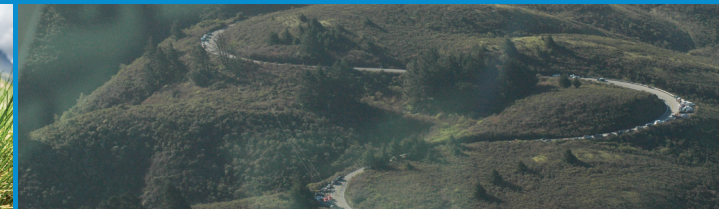
County of San Mateo Sheriff's Office  
of Emergency Services

CALL: 650.363.4790

VISIT: [www.smcready.org](http://www.smcready.org)



## WHAT TO DO DURING A TSUNAMI WARNING



If you feel a strong earthquake . . .  
Do not wait for an official warning. A  
tsunami may be coming in a few minutes.  
Large waves may continue to come  
ashore for several hours.

- In coastal areas, if you feel a strong earthquake, take action immediately
- Go to high ground or inland immediately
- Go on foot if at all possible
- Wait for an “all clear” from local emergency officials before returning to low-lying areas or the beach
- Where posted, follow signs to evacuation sites or evacuation shelters
- Follow the evacuation orders given by local officials. This may involve evacuating by foot if advised to do so.

- Monitor radio (KCBS 740 AM or 88.5 FM), television, or NOAA Weather Radio for official information. En Espanol KSJO 92.3 FM.
- If tsunami warning sirens sound, monitor the radio and be prepared to quickly evacuate.
- Stay away from low lying areas (beaches, bluffs, coastal creeks and rivers, etc.).
- If you need help with evacuation, tie a large WHITE sheet or towel to your front door knob so that it is visible from street. This will alert people that you need assistance.