

## WHAT IS A TSUNAMI?

A tsunami is a series of waves most commonly caused by an earthquake beneath the sea floor. As tsunamis enter shallow water near land, they increase in height and can cause great loss of life and property damage where they come ashore. Recent research suggests that tsunamis have struck the Washington coast on a regular basis. They can occur at any time of

the day or night, under any and all weather conditions,

and in all seasons. Beaches open to the ocean, bay entrances, tidal flats, and coastal rivers are especially vulnerable to tsunamis.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A 'DISTANT' AND A 'LOCAL' TSUNAMI?

When a tsunami has been generated by a distant earthquake, it will not reach the Washington coast for

several hours, and there is time to issue a warning.

When a tsunami is generated by a strong earthquake in

the Puget Sound area, its first waves would reach the

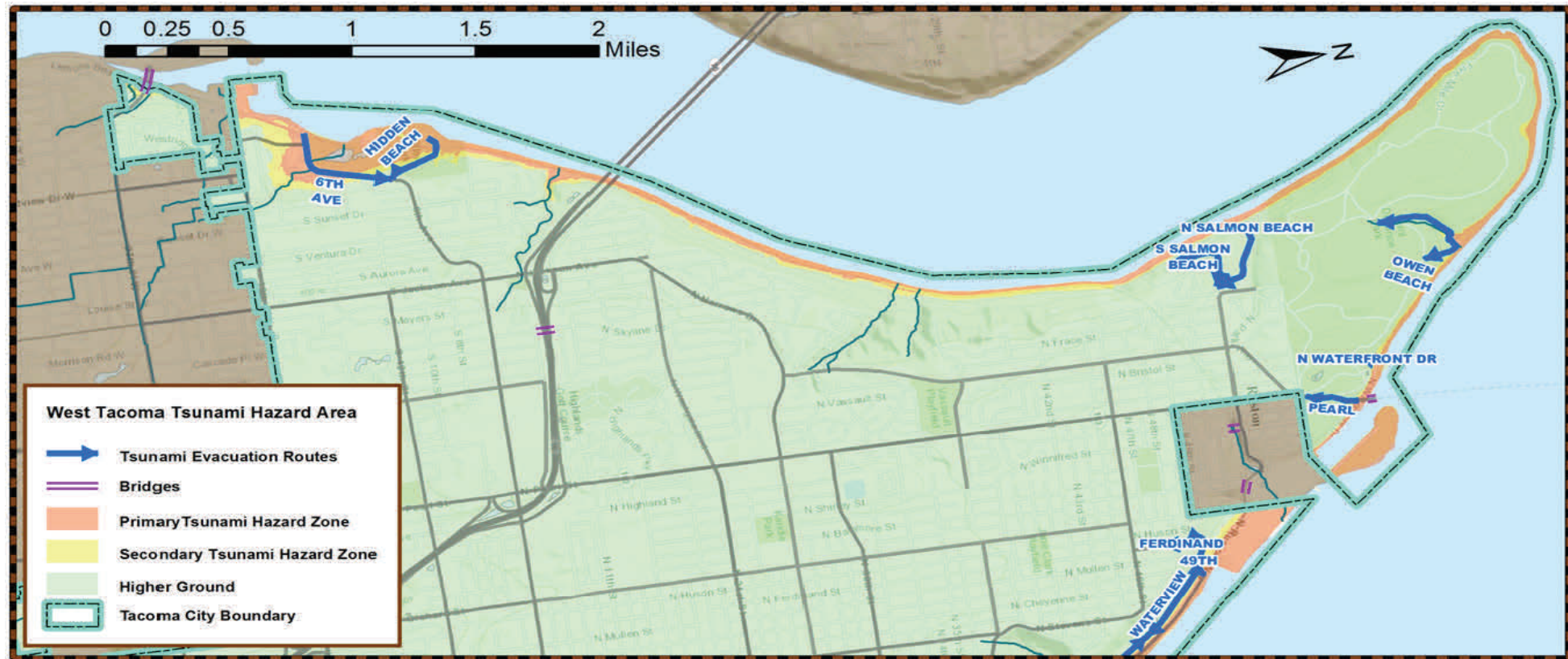
inland shorelines minutes after the ground stops shaking. Feeling an earthquake could be your only warning!

## WHAT CAN I DO TO PROTECT MYSELF FROM A TSUNAMI?

>Develop a family disaster plan. Everyone needs to know what to do on their own to protect themselves in case of disaster.

>Be familiar with local earthquake and tsunami plans.

Know where to go to survive a tsunami. Identify an evacuation site within 15 minutes walking distance of home and/or work.



## HOW DO I KNOW WHEN TO EVACUATE?

If you feel the ground shake, evacuate inland to high ground immediately! A wave as high as 30 feet could reach the Port of Tacoma area within 10-15 minutes of the quake. The first wave is often not the largest; successive waves may be spaced many minutes apart and continue to arrive for several hours. Return only after emergency officials say it is safe.

## WHERE DO I EVACUATE TO?

The map shows primary tsunami hazard zone (salmon), secondary tsunami hazard zones (yellow) and areas of higher ground (light green) and arrows (blue) for suggested evacuation routes to high ground.

Go to the nearest high ground—at least 30 feet above sea level, if possible 50 feet. If you don't have time to travel to high ground, but are in



## WHAT DO THE EVACUATION SIGNS MEAN?

Tsunami evacuation routes were developed to guide residents and visitors to safer locations when evacuation is possible. Evacuation signs along the main roads direct pedestrians and motorists to higher ground. In some places, there may be more than one way to reach safer areas. These routes are marked with multiple signs showing additional options for evacuation. In some instances walking/running will be a better option than driving due to traffic congestion. You will need to know the evacuation routes for your



## HOW DO I GET INLAND OR TO HIGH GROUND?

Car evacuation may not be possible if an earthquake has damaged roads and power lines and resulted in significant debris. If this is the case, evacuate on foot directly to the nearest high ground. Avoid lakes and wetlands, which are prone to flooding and liquefaction during aftershocks.

## WHERE CAN I STAY UNTIL THIS IS OVER?

Local emergency management has outlined possible evacuation routes (blue arrows on map) that lead to higher ground within a reasonable distance for foot traffic.

If you are at risk from a tsunami, you are urged to develop a evacuation assembly site.

The site should be:

- > outside the tsunami hazard area (salmon and yellow area on map),
- > easy to get to
- > capable of accommodating a large number of people
- > not to block roadways —leave access for emergency vehicles.
- > Assembly areas must be on publicly owned property.
- > If it is on private property, you will need the permission of the owner.

## DOES MY COMMUNITY HAVE ANY PLANS IN PLACE?

After the immediate danger is past and if there is damage to the degree that you cannot return home, you should then contact your local Emergency Management (253-973-0051) to report the location of your evacuation assembly area.

- > Emergency Management will make every effort to coordinate transportation to a temporary shelter, but may not be able to get there for several hours due to damages to the

## WHAT SHOULD I HAVE IN MY EMERGENCY KIT?

You should prepare an emergency kit with a three-day supply of necessary items for each member of your family. The kit should be adapted to your needs, but keep it light and manageable in case you must evacuate on foot. Have it ready to go for immediate evacuation.

Possible supplies include:

- > Maps showing safe routes to high ground
- > Non-perishable food and cooking and eating utensils, including can opener
- > Water and a water purification kit
- > First-aid kit and prescriptions
- > Plastic bags for water storage and waste
- > Dental and personal hygiene items
- > Sturdy shoes, clothes, sleeping bag, tent
- > Portable radio, headlamp/flashlight, and extra batteries
- > Pocket knife, whistle, matches, duct tape, and rubber, latex, and heavy-duty gloves

**BE PREPARED MAKE A DISASTER EMERGENCY KIT**  
For your House, Car and Work

## WHAT ARE THE NOAA WEATHER RADIO FREQUENCIES?

Puget Sound Marine, 162.425 MHz

Seattle, 162.550 MHz

Olympia, 162.475 MHz

This map was produced by the local Emergency Management Office with assistance from Wash-

## WHEN YOU FEEL AN EARTHQUAKE:

- > Protect yourself—drop, cover, hold until the earthquake is over
- > Grab your three-day emergency kit
- > Move quickly inland to high ground and away from inland waterways
- > Evacuate on foot if at all possible because of potential road damage and traffic jams
- > Do not wait for an official warning
- > Do not pack or delay
- > Do not return to the shore
- > Listen to NOAA Weather Radio or your local radio station for information on shelter locations and emergency broadcasts

## WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

### CITY OF TACOMA FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### Emergency Management Division

901 S Fawcett Ave

Tacoma WA 98402

Phone: 253-594-7980

Website:

[http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city\\_departments/fire/divisions/emergency\\_management/](http://www.cityoftacoma.org/government/city_departments/fire/divisions/emergency_management/)



### WASHINGTON MILITARY DEPARTMENT

Emergency Management Division

Camp Murray, WA 98430-5122

Phone: 800-562-6108

Website:



# TSUNAMI Evacuation West Tacoma



## Safety Tips for Tacoma Inland Waterways