

ShakeOut Newsletter

- Strengthening Earthquake and Tsunami Preparedness Throughout the Province -



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BC's Tsunami Preparedness Week April 9th-15th 2023

British Columbia's rugged coastline stretches thousands of kilometres and includes coastal communities, mountainous fjords, tens of thousands of marine islands, inlets, and beaches, all exposed to the ocean currents and vulnerable to potential damage from tsunami. A tsunami along British Columbia's coastline is a rare but real threat.

The largest known tsunami to have struck BC's coast was in 1700 from a M9 earthquake along the neighbouring Cascadia Subduction Zone. This event was recorded by Indigenous Peoples in their oral history and in Japanese tsunami records. In 1964, waves from the M9.2 Great Alaska Earthquake hit BC's coast and flooded Port Alberni.

As many people within BC live and work near, or visit the coast we encourage you to become familiar with your area's tsunami zones, reception centres, to practise evacuation routes ([join a High Ground Hike](#) in your area), have an emergency grab bag packed and ready, and find resources (see below) that can help you be better prepared.

Tsunami warnings in BC are issued through [B.C.'s emergency alert system](#), and will be broadcast across television, radio, and compatible mobile devices. Visitors to our province will also receive a warning on their cell phone via local network providers. [If you receive an alert](#), stop, read the alert, and follow the directions of emergency officials.

WHAT IS A TSUNAMI?

Tsunami are a series of large waves, ~90% being generated by subduction zone earthquakes; the remainder are caused by landslides, volcanic eruptions, and rare meteorological events. Tsunami waves can be up to 100 km long and as much as an hour apart. Beaches, bays, coastal river banks, and inlets along BC's coastline are the most vulnerable.

The first wave is usually not the largest, and waves may continue for up to 24 hours, so stay away from the shore until officials tell you it is safe to return.

IF YOU FEEL AN EARTHQUAKE WHEN IN A TSUNAMI ZONE

For local tsunami (generated by major earthquakes), the strong shaking is your tsunami warning.

DO NOT wait for an official warning: DROP-COVER-HOLD ON, then IMMEDIATELY evacuate, and head to higher ground, inland, or to the upper storey of a stable building. If you are in a remote area, without a tsunami hazard map/plan, evacuate to 20m above sea level. If the ocean quickly recedes, this could also be the first sign of a tsunami.

RESOURCES

- [ShakeOutBC Tsunami Evacuation Drill Brochure](#)
- [CRD Tsunami Portal and FAQs](#)
- [PreparedBC Earthquake and Tsunami Guide](#)
- [BC Emergency Management: Get Prepared for a Tsunami](#)
- [Public Safety Canada: Tsunami and Storm Surges](#)
- [Public Safety Canada: Before a Tsunami](#)
- [Public Safety Canada: During a Tsunami](#)

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