

# Tsunami Guide

A **tsunami** is a series of destructive ocean waves following an earthquake, landslide or volcanic eruption. They do **NOT** appear as a normal wave, but may appear as a rapidly rising or falling tide that can last for hours, reaching up to a mile inland. Besides deadly flooding, tsunamis can also create dangerous undercurrents in coastal waters.

San Francisco State University Main Campus would most likely **NOT** need to evacuate in the case of a tsunami impacting San Francisco Bay Area but the Estuary and Ocean Science Center in Tiburon most likely **WOULD** evacuate.

## If You are Near a Coast and a Tsunami Alert is Issued:

- **Move to higher ground** immediately. If you feel strong shaking, do not wait for an official alert. A local strong earthquake can cause a tsunami to arrive within **10 to 15 minutes**. - "**Long or Strong, Get Gone**"
- Go **100 feet up** or at least a **mile inland** to be completely out of the hazard zone.
- Do **NOT** go to the shore to watch. Tsunamis move faster than you can run.
- Stay away from **beaches, harbors and marinas**.
- Only return to hazard areas after an official all-clear has been received. Tsunamis can hit land up to **8 hours after** an initial earthquake, and the **first waves** are **NOT** the **largest**.
- Follow instructions from local officials and emergency alerts.



## **SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY**

Office of Emergency Services



**Sign up for Local Alerts**



**SF Tsunami Map**



**Sign up for SFSU Alerts**

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# Understanding Tsunami Alerts

Confused by what they all mean?  
Here is a quick guide on what to do for each type.

Alert	Meaning	Action
<b>Tsunami Information Statement</b>	An earthquake has occurred but there is <b>no threat, OR</b> it was very far away and a threat <b>has not been identified</b> .	<b>Monitor</b> local emergency information.
<b>Tsunami Watch</b>	A distant earthquake has occurred and a tsunami <b>might be coming</b> , but there is <b>still uncertainty</b> while they collect more information.	<b>Be aware.</b> Monitor local emergency information. Know your evacuation route if in a hazard zone and be prepared to take action.
<b>Tsunami Advisory</b>	A tsunami with a <b>potential</b> for dangerous currents or waves <b>is expected or occurring</b> . Conditions are dangerous for swimmers, boaters and those near the water.	<b>Take Action.</b> Stay out of the water and away from beaches and waterways. Follow instructions from local officials.
<b>Tsunami Warning</b>	The most <b>serious</b> alert. A tsunami that can cause widespread flooding and dangerous currents is <b>expected or has already arrived</b> . Conditions may continue for several hours or days after.	<b>Danger-Take Immediate Action.</b> Must <b>evacuate coastal zones</b> and move to high ground or inland.

Remember that tsunami alerts may be updated or canceled as more information becomes available. Continue to monitor emergency information. (<https://www.tsunami.gov/>)

## Sources

1. [American Red Cross Tsunami Preparedness Checklist](#)
2. <https://www.khon2.com/local-news/whats-the-difference-between-tsunami-warning-watch/>
3. [https://www.tsunami.gov/?page=message\\_definitions](https://www.tsunami.gov/?page=message_definitions)
4. <https://www.weather.gov/safety/tsunami-alerts>
5. <https://www.conservation.ca.gov/cgs/Documents/Tsunami/How-to-Survive-a-Tsunami>