

# What You Can Do Before the Next Tsunami

## BE PREPARED

- Know the best evacuation route – practice walking your route at night and in stormy weather
- Keep a “grab and go” kit by the door with what you need to survive for a day
- Discuss emergency plans with family and neighbors
- Have a NOAA Weather Radio at home and work
- Prearrange assistance from neighbors if you need help evacuating

## Grab and Go kit

- ✓ Bottled water (1 gallon/person/day)
- ✓ Canned Food/Can opener – Meat, vegetables, fruit, stew, soup, juices, crackers, cereal, nuts
- ✓ Medical and health items:
  - Medications
  - List of medications, allergies, and special needs
  - Personal supplies – hand sanitizer, moist towelettes, toilet paper, soap, toothbrush/toothpaste, feminine items, personal hygiene items, contact lens solution
  - First aid kit and handbook
- ✓ Items for infants (formula, diapers, bottles and pacifiers)
- ✓ Copies of important papers (passport, birth certificate, medical insurance and medicare cards)
- ✓ One change of clothes and footwear; extra lavalavas
- ✓ Blanket
- ✓ Whistle (to alert rescuers to your location)
- ✓ Emergency cash
- ✓ Extra set of car keys
- ✓ List of emergency contact phone numbers
- ✓ Lighter or matches
- ✓ Radio with extra batteries
- ✓ Dust mask and gloves
- ✓ Garbage bags
- ✓ Flash lights and batteries
- ✓ Comfort items

# Questions or want more information?

American Samoa Red Cross (684) 699-6011

American Samoa Department of Homeland Security – TEMCO (684) 699-6481

National Weather Service (684) 699-9130

National Park of American Samoa (684) 633-7082

NOAA National Weather Service Tsunami Program

[tsunami.gov/](http://tsunami.gov/)

U.S. Geological Survey:

[earthquake.usgs.gov/prepare/](http://earthquake.usgs.gov/prepare/)

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Preparing For Tsunamis Will Help You Prepare For All Emergencies



Photo by NPS Staff

# How to survive a TSUNAMI

in Tutuila and Manu'a Islands



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## What is a Tsunami?

A tsunami is a series of water surges usually caused by an earthquake beneath the sea floor.

### TSUNAMIS CAN TRICK YOU!

- The next tsunami will be different than the last
- The first wave is not the largest
- The largest waves could arrive much later than the first
- Damaging waves or surges could last for 12 hours or longer
- There may be long periods of calm seas (2-3 hours) before the next tsunami surge — Do not return to sea level between surges
- Just when you think it is all over, another very large surge may come

### What Areas are at Risk?

The beach, harbor, and stream mouths are at greatest risk.

### How Do I Know If an Earthquake is Big Enough to Cause a Tsunami?

- If you are on the coast and feel an earthquake, no matter how small, immediately **move inland or to high ground**.
- In other low lying areas, **COUNT** how long the earthquake lasts. If you count 20 seconds or more of ground shaking and are located in a tsunami hazard zone, **head to high ground as soon as it is safe to do so**.
- **GO ON FOOT.** Roads and bridges may be damaged by strong ground shaking. Avoid downed power lines. **If evacuation is impossible, go to the upper floor of a sturdy building or climb a tree**, but only as a last resort.



2009 – AMERICAN SAMOA First tsunami wave receding towards Pago Pago Harbor. Red Arrow points to man sitting beneath awning. (From: 2009 USGS Sound Waves; Photo by Gordon Yamasaki)

## Two Ways to Know if a Tsunami is Coming:

### Natural Warnings

**GROUND SHAKING**, the **WATER RECEDING UNUSUALLY FAR** exposing the reef, or a **LOUD OCEAN ROAR**, are all nature's warnings that a tsunami may be coming. If you observe any of these signs, **immediately walk to higher ground**. A tsunami may arrive within minutes and damaging surges are likely to occur for at least 12 hours and possibly longer. **Stay away from low coastal areas** until officials permit you to return.

### Official Warnings

You may learn that a Tsunami Warning has been issued from the TV and radio stations, NOAA weather radios, by announcements from emergency officials, or in some cases outdoor sirens or Village bells. Move away from coast or harbor areas and **seek more information minimizing phone use**. Tune into local radio or television stations for more information.

**NATURAL AND OFFICIAL WARNINGS ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT. RESPOND TO WHICHEVER YOU HEAR OR OBSERVE FIRST!**



Photo by NPS Staff

## Boating Guidelines for Local Tsunamis

You may only have minutes to respond.

**If you are on land or tied up at the dock –** Leave your boat immediately and go to high ground **ON FOOT** as soon as possible. You don't have time to save the boat.

**If you are on the water but very near shore –** If you can beach or dock your boat and get to high ground on foot within ten minutes of a Natural Warning, this is your best chance. If that is not possible, head to deep water as quickly as possible.

**If you are in deep water or very close to deep water –** If you are already in 100 fathoms of water (600 feet) then you are safe from tsunamis. If not, head to deeper water. Alert someone of your location by radio if possible.