

# TSUNAMI EMERGENCY RESPONSE

## FAQ

### **What happens in the event of a tsunami-related emergency?**

In the event of a coastal earthquake event, Emergency Management BC (EMBC) sends notification to local area communities through their emergency personnel and service stations regarding potential tsunami hazard. This triggers emergency response personnel in Prince Rupert to activate our local Emergency Response Plan, and respond according to the level and type of hazard. When necessary, the local Fire Department and RCMP set up an Emergency Operations Centre – which monitors risk, liaises with Provincial and Federal emergency response organizations and local stakeholders, and directs action for local emergency personnel, as well as emergency communications.

In the event of serious emergencies, the Mayor be asked by the Officer in Charge (in Prince Rupert, this is the Fire Chief) and a State of Local Emergency will be called. If this happens, or if an area of the community is evacuated, the muster station for residents is at the local Recreation Complex (Jim Ciccone Civic Centre), where Emergency Social Service programming is administered. If an alternative location is required, this will be provided in public notifications regarding evacuations.

During the tsunami warning event in the early morning of January 23rd, it was not determined that a State of Local Emergency or evacuations of low-lying areas would be needed, due to the low level of risk. However, RCMP and Fire Department were mobilized to initiate evacuation procedures by notifying residents door to door should it be required. Fire and RCMP also patrolled low-lying and waterfront areas as a precaution to ensure that community members retained a safe distance from potential tidal events.

### **Does our community have sirens? How will I know if there is a risk?**

Prince Rupert does not have a siren system. The City has RCMP and Fire Staff on alert during emergencies to deploy evacuations in lower-lying areas that may be impacted by a flood surge. Following the events of January 23rd, the City will also explore alternative emergency alert options, such as text alert or automated call service.

### **Where is the best place to get information in the event of an emergency?**

Local information is best. The City's website and social media platforms will be regularly updated in the event of a potential emergency or hazard notification. You can also tune into the local radio and TV stations for updates in the event of a serious emergency, as our Operations Centre will make use of local media to deploy information as well.

### **What is the greatest risk a tsunami poses to Prince Rupert?**

Prince Rupert is a relatively sheltered community from large wave events, due to the number of outlying islands. Rather than a major wave event, the greater risk to Prince Rupert is flooding in low-lying areas and the local waterfront. These areas are priorities for evacuation in the event of a tsunami-related flood event.



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## *Additional Resources:*

In addition, information is available via Emergency Management BC at:

<https://www.emergencyinfobc.gov.bc.ca/> or follow them on Twitter at @EmergencyInfoBC

As well as Environment Canada:

<https://weather.gc.ca/warnings/>

For information on coastal earthquake and tsunami events in the wider region, see:

<http://tsunami.gov/>

For information on what you and your family can do to prepare for an earthquake, see:

<https://www.shakeoutbc.ca/>

## **Where do I go if I am evacuated or there is a State of Emergency declared?**

If a State of Emergency is declared, and/or homes are evacuated, Prince Rupert residents should head to the Recreation Complex (Jim Ciccone Civic Centre), which is where local Emergency Social Services mobilizes to provide community support in the event of an emergency. If an alternative location is required, this will be provided in public notifications regarding evacuations. We request that you do not go to the Prince Rupert hospital unless you are having a medical emergency – as this may interfere with hospital operations and treatment of patients.

## **What is our Emergency Response Plan and how recent is it?**

Our Emergency Response Plan provides a clear and concise framework of procedures that direct City staff in responding to identified hazards. The intent of the Plan is to prepare City employees and partnering stakeholders to mitigate and manage negative effects in the event of an emergency in Prince Rupert. It includes details of the roles and responsibilities of Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) staff. The Plan was updated in 2016, and will be reviewed again once data from our Tsunami Hazard Assessment and flood mapping data becomes available in 2019.

