

TSUNAMI WARNING
May 7, 1986
EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT DIVISION
LOG OF EVENTS

Alaska Tsunami Warning #1

This is a Tsunami warning for the Alaska coastal area from Atka to Sand Point. A Tsunami watch is in effect for the remainder of the Alaska Coast and for British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California. A severe earthquake, preliminary magnitude 7.7 on the Richter scale, has occurred at 1447 hours Alaska Daylight Time, 22:47 Z. The earthquake was located 100 miles S.E. of Adak, Alaska, or 70 miles S.W. of Atka Village, Alaska. It is not known if a Tsunami exists, but a Tsunami may have been generated. Therefore, low-lying warned areas should be evacuated. Estimated times of arrival are as follows:

Adak	- 15:17 ADT, 23:17 Z (May 7)
Shimiya	- 16:12 ADT, 00:12 Z
Unalaska	- 16:32 ADT, 00:32 Z
Sand Pt.	- 17:02 ADT, 01:02 Z

Latitude: 51.2 North, 174.6 West

Watch extended to California. Evacuation - Alaska only.

Received from John Olson:

The afternoon and evening of May 7, 1986, at approximately 4:00pm the National Warning System began ringing carrying a Tsunami Information Bulletin. Mary Stevenson was the first member of the staff to respond to the ring and began taking notes. The preliminary indication was the earthquake was 7.1 magnitude on the Richter Scale and occurred 100 miles SE of Adak, Alaska. Prior to completing the message, that information was revised so that earthquake magnitude had been upgraded to 7.7.

When the report was typed by Mary and copies given to the staff, we initiated telephone calls to other state agencies. I advised the staff that I was taking charge of the situation in the office. I assigned different people to make various contacts. Joseph put out the initial information on the LEDES teletype. I contacted Bob Oliver and representatives of the Military Department, Highway Division, Department of Energy, and State Police who were already aware of what was happening. Upon completion of this task, the National Warning System was going off again at approximately 4:15pm.

The watch was upgraded to a warning, indicating that a Tsunami had been generated and was a full Pacific-Wide Tsunami Warning. Specifically, it included the Coast of British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and California. Again, this information was put out over the Law Enforcement Data System and over the National Warning System. Notifications were made.

I again contacted Bob Oliver, by this time Denny Miles was in the office and the time was approximately 4:30pm. Bob Oliver indicated he would be enroute to the office, his arrival was at approximately 4:45pm. After being briefed and updated, he indicated that he wanted to get together with Gerry Thompson and Denny Miles and asked me to join him for a meeting in Mrs. Thompson's Office. That meeting took place and we discussed the evacuation prospects, issuing an evacuation advisory for the entire Oregon Coast.

Continued from John Olson:

While that was taking place numerous calls were coming in on the NAWAS, by telephone, and by various radio and teletype systems from the local jurisdictions requesting information on the state's evacuation procedure and policy.

Mrs. Thompson was concerned about the definition of low lying areas and serious potential threats. She was concerned that we issue proper evacuation recommendations, since there had been some deaths as a result of a Tsunami that had occurred after the Alaska earthquake of 1964. She stressed the importance of exercising common sense and good judgement. While this meeting was going on, a couple of calls were made to Colonel Lockwood, Military Department, enquiring if there was military facilities capable of housing people. Camp Rilea, at Astoria, would house 1,000 people. The armories at Coos Bay, Tillamook, and Newport each were capable of housing 100 people. The old RADEF facility at North Bend was capable of housing approximately 60 people. At the same time, Superintendent Brandaw called in and was asked to obtain information on potential low lying areas and the areas that would be effected. The general conclusion of this discussion was that local governments, the Emergency Management Coordinators, Sheriffs, and law enforcement agencies, and all levels of local government were probably best in the position to determine the hazardous areas along the coast.

I proceeded back to the office to put the evacuation advisory out on the LEDS system and on the teletype. In the meantime, Abby showed up, she and I had a quick discussion about reassigning some staff. We had Mary go to the telephones, Kim began building a computerized information log, Abby assisted on telephones. Ken was asked to man the NAWAS. Joseph manned the LEDS teletype. Tom continued in the function of all aspects of communications and information. I assumed the role as Operations Officer. In the meantime David showed up. Lyn came in at approximately 6:30pm. I briefed Lyn on what was going on and then accompanied him back to the Governor's Office so that I could transfer policy issues from myself to him. I then proceeded back to the office to continue running operations.

The rest of the details of the evening are fairly well brought out by the other members of the staff in the various critiques and discussions. We continued monitoring the situation, received and issued bulletins, updates and provided as much information as we possibly could. Without going into a lot of specifics, let it be known it is my feeling that the agency and the staff performed in an admirable manner and everyone is to be commended.

A couple of problems that came up, were not necessarily really problems. One issue was the fact that the press ran loose in the office. I don't think that this is a problem, but it could possibly have become a problem. The other difficulty that we experienced was getting ahold of a representative from the Red Cross in Portland.

Received from Jo Lowther:

4:15pm Notified of Alaska earthquake. Assignments were:
Joseph Murray - NAWAS
Mary Stevenson - LEDS
Tom Worden - Notify Governor's Office (Gerry Thompson)
John Olson - Notify state agencies

Bob Oliver was being called by Oregon State Police

5:00pm Left the office, after receiving John Olson's OK.

Received from Ken Vogeney:

4:16pm Received initial notification of earthquake over NAWAS through the Alaska Tsunami Warning Center. Warning was for part of Alaska Coast and a watch for British Columbia, Wash, Ore. and Calif.

4:30pm Staff Meeting called by John Olson
Discussed what was occurring and who needed to be contacted.
NAWAS - Joseph
LEDS - Mary

John contacted:
DOE
Military
Highway
OSP
Coast Guard
Parks Division

Tom contacted Portland Weather

John delegated contacting Parks to Ken Vogeney. Ken could not reach Parks directly. Ken contacted OSP Headquarters, Sr. Trooper Loewenstein, and requested they contact all the coastal State Police offices over the teletype to contact all the coastal parks. Sr. Tpr. Loewenstein called Ken back with a confirmation of message sent, advising all campers to stay off the beaches between 9:00 p.m. and 11:00p.m., 5/7/86.

6:30pm John called staff for briefing and instructed Ken to contact the Highway Division and the 304th Air Rescue to advise and update them on the situation.

6:53pm Ken contacted Rob Edgar, Highway, and read Governor's statement over the phone.

6:59pm Ken contacted the 304th, their duty officer was not available, but he did reach Capt. McGinley and advised him of the approaching Tsunami and gave ETA for the Oregon Coast. Ken advised he would go through proper channels to bring the 304th on line, if they were needed. Capt. McGinley said he would contact and advise the duty officer as well as the 939th Air Force Reserve Group.

Continued from Ken Vogeney:

- 8:48pm Received message, over NAWAS, that Alaska Tsunami Warning Center was transferring control to Pacific Tsunami Warning Center. Alaska is now all clear. The rest of the Pacific Coast is still under Tsunami Warning.
- 9:59pm Ken advised, over NAWAS, Coastal Counties of Pacific Tsunami Warning Center's take over of warning. Tsunami warning supplement #6 was read to all counties.
- 10:11pm Heard, over NAWAS, Washington calling Pacific Tsunami Warning Center reporting that an amateur radio had reported sighting at Cape Scott Lighthouse, Vancouver Island, Canada, five 4.7 foot waves coming in at 80 second intervals at 21:15 PDT. The Coast Guard confirmed this and reported that their tidal recording gauge had not picked the waves up.
- 10:44pm Tillamook County requested hard copy of NAWAS cancellation. Ken told them it was pending Governor's Office approval and is forthcoming.
- 10:53pm Read Governor's statement and weather teletype from Pacific Tsunami Warning Center to all coastal stations. Portland Weather and Curry County did not acknowledge cancellation of warning.
- 10:58pm Contacted Curry County by telephone. They acknowledged cancellation of Tsunami warning.
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Received from Joseph Murray:

- 6:00pm Received a call from Don Northrop, Portland Weather Service, stating he was concerned about projection times. Wants to interpolate times between Neah Bay and Crescent City and has:
- 2135PDT Seaside
2130PDT Newport
2140PDT Coos Bay
- Astoria is not on the Coast, has to travel up River to get there. It may hit Seaside sooner.
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Received from Kimberly Bemis:

- 5:00pm Began receiving incoming telephone calls.
- 6:45pm Started recording computerized informational log.
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7:14pm Abby and Kimberly began notification of key state agencies to alert that, if and when, the tsunami hits Oregon Coast the Emergency Operations Center will have to be activated. This is only an alert and we will notify later.

Forest	Dan Shults	7:15pm
Health	Kristine Gebbie	Lyn contacted
Highway	Rob Edgar for Parks	7:19pm
DEQ	Paged	7:13pm
Energy	Bill Dixon	7:14pm
F&W	Fred Hallauer	7:15pm
DEQ	Dale Wulffenstein	7:26pm
Military	Lt. Col Weintret	7:30pm

Received from Tom Worden:

5:05pm Tom activated first warning to Coastal area radio stations (EBS). Network was configured in seven minutes.

5:10pm Media calls started coming in which included KEX, KGW, and KXL all wanting to know status. Tom gave information provided from the NAWAS.

5:15pm Received call from Dr. Wright, who is with the Health Dept., saying he had alerted his people on the coast with regard to water supplies and purification.

6:10pm Second alert was delivered with Governor's message.

6:27pm Spoke with Kent Parsons, Transportation Dept. Electronic Mail Coordinator, offering to set up an E-Mail system to all Oregon Coastal Parks.

6:54pm KMTR-TV called and wanted to be added to the Tsunami Warning Network.

7:15pm KSHR radio requested authority to stay on the air past sunset. Permission granted.

7:25pm Called George Miller, National Weather Service, gave him the same information. He knew nothing about the Pudget Island incident, but had heard the ham operator report.

7:45pm Advised coastal counties, by NAWAS, of the availability of housing.

7:50pm Seaside City Manager called requesting information.

9:20pm Joe Brunick, Clatsop County, telephoned with some information concerning predicted wave heights at Pudget Island in the Columbia River at two to eight feet. He had received the information from a Deputy at Kathlamath, Washington, who in turn attributed the information to the Washington Department of Emergency Services. Brunick also reported an unconfirmed report from a ham radio operator that waves were five to eight feet at Port Hardy on Vancouver Island and traveling 500 miles an hour. Both reports were checked with the Washington State Department of Emergency Services. They had no knowledge of the Pudget Island report, but said they had heard the same ham report, but it was unconfirmed.

Continued from Tom Worden:

- 9:20pm Contacted Washington Department of Emergency Services to determine if Wahkiakum County, Washington was evacuating Pudget Island, on the Columbia River, on the advice of the Washington State Emergency Services. Ben Dew, of DES, said no, that the predictions of two to 18 feet originated from the National Weather Service, in Seattle, in a general briefing and passed to counties. The Sheriff of Wahkiakum County ordered the evacuation based on a worst case scenario. Washington State did confirm a two-three foot rise at Neah Bay. Also confirmed a "ham" report of 4.7 foot rise at Hardy Point, Vancouver Island.
- 10:30pm Network connected for all clear message.
- 10:45pm Tsunami Warning All Clear announced to radio network by Denny Miles.

Received from David Yandell:

- 7:45pm Contacted Governor's Office, Bob Oliver; advised of news story regarding ETA Tsunami at Seattle as 8:00pm PDT, 5/7/86.
- 7:46pm Contacted Governor's Office, Gerry Thompson, to advise that partial EOC activation complete.
- 8:05pm Contacted Governor's Office, Bob Oliver, to advise of cable news network report regarding estimated speed and size of Tsunami.
- 8:37pm Tom Dye of Tillamook County called to advise that temporary shelters were set up and citizens in low lying areas have been instructed to evacuate per Governor's instructions.
- 8:40pm Joe, KBCH in Lincoln City, called and requested an update and statement regarding the Tsunami from Denny Miles.
- 9:29pm John DeFrance, Columbia County, called requesting information regarding KBAM radio broadcast advising citizens living in the low land areas of Wahkiakum County, Washington to evacuate per the instructions of the Wahkiakum Co. Sheriff. He requested that we check and advise.
- 9:35pm Tom Worden contacted George Miller of the National Weather Service, and Washington State Dept. of Emergency Services, to verify the nature of the evacuation order for the area along the Columbia River bordering Wahkiakum County. Both agencies were unaware of the need for evacuation.
- 9:40pm Contacted John DeFrance and advised that no one is aware why the evacuation order for Wahkiakum Co. was issued. It was agreed we would continue to monitor the situation and advise John should evacuation procedures be required.
- 10:15pm Contacted John DeFrance to advise the nature of evacuation order for Wahkiakum Co. as being a National Weather Service bulletin which was interpreted by the Wahkiakum Co. Sheriff as being potential enough threat to warrant the evacuation notice as a precautionary measure.

EMD STAFF ASSIGNMENTS
8:24pm

OPERATIONS OFFICER	John Olson
COMMUNICATIONS	David Yandell & Tom Worden
INFORMATION TO GOV'S OFFICE	Abby Kershaw
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER	Denny Miles
TELEPHONES	Mary Stevenson & Abby Kershaw
INFORMATION LOGS	Kimberly Bemis
NAWAS	Ken Vogeney
LEDS	Joseph Munnay

Everyone please keep personal logs.

Received from Mary Stevenson:

4:16pm Took NAWAS Bulletin #1, transcribed and put out on LEDS.
Took NAWAS Bulletin #2 and assumed the station watch at the NAWAS drop.
Called all Coastal Counties on the NAWAS and read them the warning that a Tsunami has been generated.
Took NAWAS Bulletin #3.
Took NAWAS Bulletin #4.

7:15pm Contacted the Oregon Coast Counties to give ETA for Seaside, Newport and Coos Bay.

7:26pm Issued the Governor's recommendation for Coastal Counties over the NAWAS.

8:05pm Took NAWAS Bulletin #5, afterwhich I transferred to front office telephone receiving.

10:30pm Called Kris Gebbie, Health Division, & Earl Smith, Civil Air Patrol to give "all clear" message.

Received from Lyn Hardy:

7:06pm Kris Gebbie telephone and gave me this number to contact her at, 221-1384

Continued from Lyn Hardy:

- 7:13pm Telephoned Bill Mayer, (206)445-4518, Told him of all notifications. He said, "sounds good" they are on standby.
- 7:15pm Wayne Stinson telephoned asking for the definition of low areas. Replied beaches, parks, low beach front property, etc.
- 7:20pm Gerry Thompson requested that we notify all locals of housing availability at all National Guard facilities. Notice was sent on NAWAS & LEDS.
- 7:25pm Gerry Thompson - Coast Guard, Neah Bay going to give warning. Can we tie in? John Olson calling Coast Guard to look into it.
- 7:45pm Earl Smith - Home telephone 538-2052, is now at Wing, 288-4169, offering anything that CAP has. Told him to stand by and have his people stand by, just in case.
- 7:50pm Gerry - TV saying Channel 8, PDX.
- 8:04pm Joe Holden offered to fly and look. Call back in one half hour.
- 8:41pm Joe Holden called. I said call Coast Guard and see if he can fill any gaps.
- 9:08pm Gary Lockwood - Armonies are getting some traffic. I said requests are to come through us. We'll follow up message.
- 10:49pm Lt. Yost, Coast Guard, We are standing down.
- Lyn's contacts for all clear message. Chris Gebbie 221-1384
Earl Smith 538-2052 home or at
288-4169 CAP Wing Hdq.
Joe Holden 378-4880 no answer
10:43pm
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Received from Governor's Office:

6:20pm The Oregon Governor's office is recommending a precautionary evacuation of all low lying areas along the Oregon coast. In addition, the public is warned not to approach these areas. The Alaska Tsunami Warning Center has advised us of a severe earthquake in Alaska and a resultant Tsunami. The Tsunami is forecast to reach the Oregon coast about 9:15pm to 9:30pm this evening. Residents of the low lying areas should listen to their local radio station for an all-clear message prior to re-entering the area.

Note that the arrival times are now about 30 minutes earlier than originally reported by the Warning Center.

Continued from Governor's Office:

- 10:20pm Denny Miles reported that the Governor had been contacted for the second time.
- 10:35pm The Alaska Tsunami Warning Center has cancelled the warning for the Oregon Coast. The Oregon Governor's Office is recommending that citizens return to their homes. "The apparent lack of damage or injury is gratifying," Governor Atiyeh said. "Given how unpredictable Tsunamis are, I am glad we took precautions. As expected Oregonians acted responsibly and rationally."
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Received from Abby Kershaw:

- 7:30pm Began State Agency notifications (see prior message).
- 7:35pm Seaside City Manager called requesting information. Ops personnel will return call with situational update.
- 7:45pm Contacted Washington Department of Emergency Management for update on their situation. Passed information to Denny Miles.
- 8:10pm Valley News, KECH-22, in person to view operations.
- 8:15pm Attempted contact with Cherilyn Foglio, Red Cross, to inquire as to the availability of Shelter Care Kits. No contact made. Gresham P.D. will attempt to contact her at her residence.
- 8:30pm Talked to Trucking Firm from Bozeman, Montana. Offered use of their trucks and drivers, if needed. State would only be responsible for gas. Trucks and drivers are located at Jubitz Truck Stop, Portland. Passed information to Denny Miles.
- 8:46pm Talked to Ben Dew, Washington Department of Emergency Management, and received update on current situation in Washington. Ben stated that they were being plagued with rumors, some initiated by HAM Operators in various areas along their coast.
- 9:15pm Talked to Cherilyn Foglio regarding Shelter Kits. She will remain on standby in case kits are needed. Transportation and logistics will be arranged at that time.
- 10:50pm Began phone down of state agencies, giving the all-clear message.

Notified Governor's Office, throughout the evening, of information received via the National Warning System (NAWAS) - see Law Enforcement Data System (LEDS) teletypes for information. Times are the same as the teletypes.

END

kab