

Coast guard searches for man swept to sea

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The U.S. Coast Guard is currently searching for a man swept out to sea while taking photos of incoming tsunami waves near the mouth of the Klamath River.

The unidentified man and two friends reportedly traveled to the shoreline to take photos of the incoming waves when all three were swept out to sea. Two of the men were able to get safely back to shore, but the third remains unaccounted for, according to the release.

The Coast Guard is current searching for the man with Dolphin helicopters from Air Station Humboldt Bay.

According to the dispatch center for the Curry County Sheriff's Office in Oregon, four people were also swept off a beach near Brookings, but all were able to make it back to shore and only minor injuries were reported.

Officials have repeatedly asked people to stay away from the water, and resist the temptation to view the tsunami event from coastal areas.

Meanwhile, officials in Crescent City and Curry County, Ore., continue to report extensive property damage.

"The harbor has been destroyed," said Crescent City Councilman Rich Enea in a phone interview earlier this morning. "Thirty-five boats have been crushed and the harbor has major damage. Major damage."

Officials in Crescent City have also reported that most of the piers and docks in the harbor have major damage, though they say no injuries have been reported in the area.

In Brookings, Sheriff's Office dispatchers said the harbor has also suffered extensive damage, with docks being pulled loose and boats being washed out to sea.

While early reports forecasted surge waves of 7- to 7.5-feet, Enea said the latest surge came in at 8.1-feet. Enea said early evacuations were very successful, and urged residents to stay on safe ground.

"Nobody panicked and everybody just did what they were supposed to do," Enea said shortly before noon. "Now, they say it's going to last for eight hours. The hard part is going to be keeping people away (from the water)."

"So far, we're OK," Enea continued. "And, I'm saying OK because people haven't been hurt. Property damage can be fixed, lost lives can't."

National Weather Service meteorologist Matthew Bloemer said waves in Crescent City have maintained their intensity since they began. Waves have been averaging between 5 to 7 feet in the last two hours, but 6 to 8 foot waves are possible.

"They (Crescent City) are a far cry from having any kind of all clear sounded," he said.

In Humboldt Bay, the waves have been much smaller -- with a maximum height of about a foot and a half wave since the event began -- but that doesn't diminish the danger, Bloemer said.

Even if the water looks like it's calmed down, it could mean that several waves will line up on each other, he said.

In Arcata, the police department said it is lifting its evacuation advisory and removing road closures.

"We're still being cautious and still monitoring, but probably the significant danger has subsided," Arcata Police Chief Tom Chapman said shortly before noon. "We want to remind the public to continue to stay away from the local beaches and the jetty."