

Counties to conduct tsunami warning test

Eureka Times-Standard, 3-6-11

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Weather Service announced this year's Tsunami Warning Test will be conducted March 23.

The weather service said in its announcement that the tsunami tests over the years have resulted in the region becoming “the most tsunami aware of any region in the United States.”

The test will be conducted between 11 a.m. and noon on March 23 in Del Norte, Humboldt and Mendocino counties.

NOAA said the test of the Emergency Alert System is to ensure it works properly during a real tsunami emergency.

The test will consist of interruptions of television and radio stations and activation of NOAA weather radios with the public alert feature.

NOAA said not all cable TV stations may be able to participate.

During the test, people watching television between 11 a.m. and noon on March 23 can expect to see a crawler indicating that a tsunami warning has been issued and hear a voice indicating that it is only a test.

”If you don't hear the TV audio for any reason, please remember that this is only a test,” the release states. “If you are listening to the radio, you will hear alerting tones followed by a voice announcing that the test is occurring. If you have a NOAA weather radio with the Public Alert feature, the radio will automatically turn on and you will hear the same message as broadcast on radios. In some areas, you may also hear the sounding of a tsunami siren, or you may hear an airplane testing its public address system. Some schools and communities in the three test counties may be practicing their evacuation plans during the test. You will receive additional information about any planned drills in your area.”

The release said that during the test the public does not need to take any action, should not call 911 or local authorities, and there is no need to evacuate homes or businesses.

NOAA asks the public to help them evaluate the tests by following the links online or by telephone at: www.weather.gov/eureka or 443-5610.

For more information about preparing for earthquakes, tsunamis or any other disaster on the North Coast, contact the American Red Cross (Humboldt -- 443-4521; Del Norte -- 464-2277; Mendocino -- 463-0112).