

First-ever tsunami maps for the Bay Area

Carol Bogart, San Francisco Examiner, 12-18-09

Newly updated California Tsunami Inundation Maps were released Dec. 17 by state, federal and local authorities. The 130 maps cover vulnerable areas along the California coast, including 100 percent of the San Francisco Bay Area, the first time the state has developed tsunami inundation maps inside the Bay.

These maps show the maximum inland inundation possible in any of 40 different tsunami scenarios for California, said Rick Wilson, the state scientific lead on the project.

Agencies that worked on the project include the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA), the California Geological Survey (CGS), and the Tsunami Research Center at the University of Southern California.

For more than two years, specialists have been developing and modeling offshore earthquake and submarine landslide scenarios in order to identify the potential tsunami inundation for each coastal community.

The maps cover roughly 50 percent of the state's 840 mile-long coastline. Besides the Bay Area, the maps also cover about 90 percent of the coast from Santa Barbara to the Mexico border.

Funded through the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program, the state program has worked with county and city emergency managers to help incorporate these tsunami inundation maps into their emergency response plans.

Natural warning signs of a tsunami include:

- Strong ground shaking
- A loud ocean roar
- An advancing wave on the horizon, or the water receding unusually far from the beach, exposing the sea floor.

Don't wait for an official warning for a tsunami caused by a local earthquake, said Cal EMA's Kevin Miller. If you are visiting the coast and feel strong shaking, first protect yourself from the earthquake, then move to high ground and stay there.

To see the new inundation maps, find links to local emergency preparedness and planning Web sites, and learn more about tsunami hazards and what to do if a tsunami is coming, go to:

▪ **Cal EMA:** www.myhazards.calema.ca.gov

▪ **California Geological Survey:** www.consrv.ca.gov/cgs

▪ **NOA West Coast and Alaska Tsunami Warning Center:** www.catwc.arh.noaa.gov

▪ **Tsunami Research Center at University of Southern California:**

www.usc.edu/dept/tsunamis/2005/index.php