

## Tsunami Waves Strike Northern California Following Major Earthquake in Russia

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Tsunami waves generated by a powerful 8.6 magnitude earthquake near Russia's Kamchatka Peninsula reached the U.S. mainland early Wednesday morning, hitting parts of Northern California and prompting warnings and advisories across the Pacific region. The initial impact in the United States was reported near Crescent City and Humboldt Bay, with no immediate injuries or significant damage confirmed.

According to the National Weather Service (NWS) in Eureka, waves measuring approximately 3.6 feet struck the Northern California coast just before 1:00 a.m. Pacific Time. The seismic event, one of the strongest recorded globally in recent years, occurred about 8.2 miles southeast of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, Russia, around 7:24 p.m. Eastern Time. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) classified it as a major undersea earthquake, capable of triggering hazardous tsunami activity across the northern Pacific.

The tsunami warning issued for a portion of the California coast from the Oregon border down to Cape Mendocino remained in effect for several hours. Crescent City, a community of fewer than 6,000 residents, was identified by the NWS as one of the areas most at risk of potential flooding. City officials used social media to urge residents to stay vigilant, noting that high tide was expected between 3:30 and 4:00 a.m., potentially intensifying wave surges.

Minor wave activity was also detected in San Francisco around 1:12 a.m., though no casualties or infrastructure damage were reported. Meanwhile, across the Pacific, Hawaii braced for potential impact. Residents were advised to evacuate to higher ground, and hotel guests were directed to upper floors as a precaution. The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency reported waves nearing 4.9 feet at Kahului on Maui's northern shore. The Hawaii Emergency Management Agency reported waves nearing 4.9 feet at Kahului on Maui's northern shore, leading to temporary flight suspensions and widespread traffic congestion during the evacuations. By 10:45 p.m. local time, officials downgraded the tsunami warning to an advisory and lifted evacuation orders.

Closer to the epicenter, the Russian Far East sustained limited damage and minor injuries. Kamchatka's regional health chief, Oleg Melnikov, confirmed that a number of people were injured while evacuating buildings, including a hospital patient who leapt from a window. At a cancer clinic in Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky, medical staff reportedly paused surgery during the quake to protect the patient, later continuing the procedure safely. Their efforts were recognized by local authorities, according to the Associated Press.

Significant wave activity was reported across the Kuril Islands, where tsunami surges exceeded 10 feet. Russia's Oceanology Institute stated that some parts of the Kamchatka coastline may have experienced waves ranging between 33 and 49 feet. Severo-Kurilsk was hit by waves topping 19 feet, resulting in flooding, temporary power outages, and displaced fishing boats.

The tsunami threat prompted widespread alerts across the region. Japan issued evacuation orders for more than two million residents spanning over 220 local jurisdictions, from Hokkaido in the north to Okinawa in the south. Japan's Chief Cabinet Secretary, Yoshimasa Hayashi, warned that elevated wave levels could persist for at least 24 hours. Local officials confirmed that residents in some areas might not be allowed to return home until Thursday.

Other countries, including China, Canada, Mexico, Guam, and several Central and South American nations, were also under tsunami watches or advisories as a precautionary measure following the quake.

This event underscores the ongoing seismic risks faced by communities around the Pacific Ring of Fire. While initial impacts on U.S. soil appear limited, officials have emphasized continued monitoring and preparedness in the face of future natural disasters.