

Your guide to planning **YOUR TSUNAMI EVACUATION ROUTE**

What is it?

A tsunami evacuation route is the path you, your whānau, colleagues, or flatmates can follow, to get to higher ground or inland as quickly as possible following a long or strong earthquake.

Why do it?

Aotearoa New Zealand is at risk of tsunami. If you live in a tsunami zone you may have as little as 10 minutes before the first waves begin to arrive. Having a plan and knowing where to go saves you and your loved ones time, and this saves lives.



Plan it

Sit down with your household to figure out where you will go and how long it will take.

- Find your location on a tsunami zone map <https://tinyurl.com/tsunamizones>.
- Work out the most direct route to a safe area. The coloured zones show which areas get wet; first red, then orange, then yellow. Plan your route accordingly.
- Plan to travel on foot or by bike as roads could be damaged or congested.
- Time how long that path will take you, and consider any possible obstacles that could arise in a worst-case scenario.
- If a long or strong earthquake occurs, you must leave immediately once the shaking stops. Keep a grab bag accessible.
<https://tinyurl.com/evacbags>
- Keep pet food and leashes in your grab bag so you can take your pets.



Post it

Put your plan up somewhere visible in your home or workplace. Keep it on your phone or put it on social media.

- Let your wider whānau know your household plan.
- Know your child's school plan and household members' workplace plans.
- Encourage everyone to have a grab bag in their room or under their desk.
- Let your neighbours know too. It is important that everyone knows what to do so that they can act quickly.
- Consider who might need help evacuating, such as older persons or people with disabilities, and whether you have the ability and time to do so.



Practice it

Walk or bike your evacuation route regularly.

- Practice your evacuation route so that you know exactly where to go when a long or strong earthquake occurs.
- Practice getting your grab bag and moving to your safe zone, and time how long this takes.
- Consider alternative routes you could take if your primary route is blocked or congested.
- Make it part of your usual walk, jog, or bike ride!
- Practice your Drop, Cover, Hold. This will help to protect you while the earthquake is happening. Strong shaking can make it hazardous to stand or walk, and things can fall, so do not attempt to evacuate until after the shaking stops.



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FAQ's:

Will there be a warning telling us to evacuate?

- For a near-source tsunami, natural warning signs will be your only warning. This could be - feeling a long OR strong earthquake, seeing a sudden rise or fall in sea level, or hearing loud, unusual noises coming from the sea.
- There will not be time for a formal warning, such as an alert or siren. A tsunami from a nearby source, such as the Hikurangi Subduction Zone, could arrive within minutes. It is important that you know your route well so that you can move quickly.

Who should evacuate after a long OR strong earthquake?

- Everyone in all the tsunami zones - red, orange, and yellow - should evacuate.

Where do I go?

- Your local tsunami maps will show your safe zones, which are outside of the red, orange, and yellow zones. It is important that once you reach the safe zone you keep moving to allow space for others trying to evacuate as well.
- If you have whānau or friends outside of the evacuation zone, plan to go to their home and shelter there. If you are evacuating a large group, such as a school, create a plan with a school outside of the evacuation zone, and use this as your safe location. Make sure your whānau know your plan.

Can I use my car to evacuate?

- It is recommended that you evacuate on foot or bicycle if possible. However, agile vehicles such as motorbikes or quadbikes could be a good option as well.
- After a long or strong earthquake, roads may be damaged by liquefaction or landslides, making them impassable. Roads can also quickly become congested if lots of people are trying to use their cars. This slows down everyone's evacuation.
- A car may be the only option for an older person or a person with a disability and emergency services may also be trying to move their vehicles out of a tsunami zone. Those who can travel on foot or with an agile vehicle, such as a bike, should do so to leave space for others who cannot.

What if I have a disability?

- Organise a personal support network of multiple people who can support you to evacuate. These people must regularly be in the same area as you. Ensure that you are factored into their tsunami evacuation plan.
- Consider what extra supplies you may need in your grab bag, such as a writing pad, extra cane, medical information, supplies for your assistance dog, etc. For more information: <https://tinyurl.com/supportedevac>

Can I evacuate up to a high floor of a building (vertical evacuation)?

- Vertical evacuation means evacuating to the tops of buildings or tall built structures, rather than higher ground or inland.
- This could be an option in some circumstances, but be aware that the building might not withstand a tsunami. Some buildings in places like Japan have been built to withstand a tsunami, but this is not the case in New Zealand at this time.
- If vertical evacuation is your only option, look for a sturdy, reinforced concrete or structural steel building, on your evacuation route that you could access.
- Be aware, you may be unable to leave your evacuation spot for several days. Falling debris and fire are also hazards you should consider. This is something that you (and your household or colleagues) should discuss when creating your evacuation plan.

How do I know I am doing the right thing?

- Most people will have to weigh up multiple options when creating their tsunami evacuation plan. You need to be comfortable with your own evacuation plan.
- Plans should be flexible, focus on where you want to go and be prepared to take an alternative route if needed.
- When a long or strong earthquake occurs, there will not be time to check social media or websites for advice, so it is important to have these conversations now.



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