

Product/Service Description Document
Proposal to Change Tsunami Advisory Products
September 2020

Part I - Mission Connection

a. Product/Service Description – As part of the ongoing Hazard Simplification (Haz Simp) Project, the National Weather Service (NWS) is exploring proposed changes to the Tsunami Advisory. NWS currently issues Tsunami Advisory products to alert stakeholders to lower-magnitude tsunami events that may pose a danger to coastal communities. In some situations, Tsunami Advisory products may be misunderstood in terms of their expected impacts to coastal populations, along with the associated protective actions that need to be taken. It is proposed that a new way of communicating the exact nature of the danger may reduce some of the confusion surrounding these lower-magnitude products. The proposal includes three options, with new titles and enhanced language for the potential new product options:

Option A: Tsunami Warning for Strong Currents [with Tsunami in Header]

This option would replace Tsunami Advisory with a Tsunami Warning with text to indicate a tsunami threat of less than 1m that primarily impacts beaches and harbors due to strong currents and unexpected surges.

Option B: Harbor and Beach Hazard Warning [without Tsunami in Header]

This option would replace Tsunami Advisory with a new category of warning (Harbor and Beach Hazard Warning) with “tsunami” referenced in the body of the message rather than in the header to indicate a tsunami threat less than 1m that primarily impacts beaches and harbors due to strong currents and unexpected surges.

Option C: Harbor and Beach Tsunami Warning [with Tsunami in Header]

This option would replace Tsunami Advisory with a new category of warning (Harbor and BeachTsunami Warning). In this case “tsunami” is referenced in the header and amplified with text in the main body to indicate a threat less than a tsunami of 1m that primarily impacts beaches and harbors due to strong currents and unexpected surges.

b. Product Type – Operational

c. Purpose – Social science research supporting the Haz Simp project has indicated that Advisory products issued by the NWS may be misunderstood by the public and partners. In some situations, Advisory products may be misunderstood for coastal

populations, along with actions that need to be taken. In addition to new product titles, more descriptive text within the products identifying specific actions to be taken, as well as potential impacts to coastal communities are included.

d. Audience - The target audiences for these products are customers and partners such as emergency managers, state and local officials, media and the general public.

e. Presentation Format – These are text based products, which are distributed over all standard NWS dissemination methods including tsunami.gov.

f. Feedback Method – A public survey will be available to provide feedback at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/tsunamiadvisory> and open from September 30, 2020 through October 30, 2020.

Part II – Technical Description

a. Format and Science Basis – The format is described in Part I, Section a. The Tsunami Warning Centers will use available tools to determine the risk of these hazards occurring in their areas and issue products for their Designated Service Areas according to criteria and expected impacts.

b. Availability – These products will be available at all times and issued when criteria are met.

c. Three examples of the proposed new products are shown here:

Option A: Tsunami Warning for Strong Currents [with Tsunami in Header]

WEPA41 PAAQ 081814

TSUWCA

BULLETIN

Tsunami Message Number 1

NWS National Tsunami Warning Center Palmer AK

1114 AM PDT Fri Jul 8 2016

AKZ187-195-191-081944-

/T.NEW.PAAQ.TS.W.0086.160708T1814Z-000000T0000Z/

Coastal areas between and including Samalga Pass, Alaska
(30 miles SW of Nikolski) to Attu, Alaska

1114 AM PDT Fri Jul 8 2020

...A Tsunami Warning for strong currents or increased water levels of .3 to 1 meter (1 - 3 FT) near shore is now in effect which includes the coastal areas of Alaska from Samalga Pass Alaska /which is located 30 miles SW of Nikolski/ to Attu Alaska...

If you are located in or near this alerted area, move off the beach and out of harbors and marinas.

This warning means a tsunami capable of producing dangerous strong currents, anomalous waves, or higher-than average water levels in or very near the water is expected or is already occurring. Damage to boats and harbors is also possible. Locations within the warning area should not expect widespread inundation, although low-level inundation is possible. Stay away from the shore/harbors until you are notified that the warning has been lifted. Tsunamis are a series of waves dangerous many hours after initial arrival time. The first wave may not be the largest.

At 1109 AM Pacific Daylight Time on July 8 an earthquake with preliminary magnitude 8.2 occurred 90 miles southeast of Petropavlovsk Kamchatka.

Estimated tsunami wave arrival times for selected sites are;

Shemya	Alaska	1130 AM. AKDT. July 8.
Adak	Alaska	1230 PM. AKDT. July 8.
Saint Paul	Alaska	145 PM. AKDT. July 8.

The tsunami warning will remain in effect until further notice.
Refer to the internet site tsunami.gov for more information.

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Option B: Harbor and Beach Hazard Warning [without Tsunami in Header]

WEPA41 PAAQ 081814
TSUWCA

BULLETIN
Tsunami Message Number 1
NWS National Tsunami Warning Center Palmer AK

1114 AM PDT Fri Jul 8 2020

AKZ187-195-191-081944-

/T.NEW.PAAQ.TS.W.0086.160708T1814Z-000000T0000Z/

Coastal areas between and including Samalga Pass, Alaska
(30 miles SW of Nikolski) to Attu, Alaska

1114 AM PDT Fri Jul 8 2020

...A Harbor and Beach Hazard Warning for strong currents or increased water levels of .3 to 1 meter (1 - 3 FT) near shore is now in effect for the coastal areas of Alaska from Samalga Pass Alaska /which is located 30 miles SW of Nikolski/ to Attu Alaska...

If you are located in or near this alerted area, move off the beach and out of harbors and marinas.

This Warning means a tsunami capable of producing dangerous strong currents, anomalous waves, or higher-than average water levels in or very near the water is expected or is already occurring. Damage to boats and harbors is also possible. Locations within the warning area should not expect widespread inundation, although low-level inundation is possible. Stay away from the shore/harbors until you are notified that the warning has been lifted. Tsunamis are a series of waves dangerous many hours after initial arrival time. The first wave may not be the largest.

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The Harbor and Beach Hazard Warning will remain in effect until further notice.

Refer to the internet site tsunami.gov for more information.

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Option C: Harbor and Beach Tsunami Warning [with Tsunami in Header]

WEPA41 PAAQ 081814
TSUWCA

BULLETIN

Tsunami Message Number 1
NWS National Tsunami Warning Center Palmer AK
1114 AM PDT Fri Jul 8 2020

AKZ187-195-191-081944-
/T.NEW.PAAQ.TS.W.0086.160708T1814Z-000000T0000Z/
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