

STATE OF ALASKA

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STATEWIDE DESIGN AND ENGINEERING SERVICES DIVISION

April 2, 1998

Re: Tsunami Signs


Robert E. Heavilin, Director
Division of Emergency Services
Department of Military and Veteran's Affairs
PO Box 5750
Ft. Richardson, AK 99505-5750

Dear Mr. Heavilin:

The "Tsunami Sign Procedures" you submitted under cover of your March 16, 1998 memo is hereby approved.

Please make the following minor change before you distribute the procedures. In the third paragraph on the first page, change the sentence which reads "has been added to the Alaska Sign Design Specifications Manual" to read "will be added to the Alaska Sign Design Specifications Manual." This change cannot be made until a new manual is issued.

Sincerely,



Michael L. Downing, P.E.
Director

cc: Bo Brownfield, P.E., Deputy Commissioner
Colleen Ackiss, P.E., Regional Traffic Engineer, Northern
Gary Hogins, P.E., Chief, Design & Construction Standards
Mike Lukshin, P.E., Regional Traffic Engineer, SE
Dennis Morford, P.E., Regional Traffic Engineer, Central
Kurt Smith, P.E., State Traffic Engineer

STATE OF ALASKA

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March 16, 1998

Mr. Michael L. Downing, P.E.
Director, Statewide Design and Engineering Services Division
Alaska Department of Transportation and Public Facilities
3132 Channel Drive
Juneau, AK 99801-7898

Re: Letter of Feb. 4, 1998

Dear Mr. Downing:

The enclosed draft of "Tsunami Sign Procedures" is in response to your letter of Feb. 4, 1998 to Mr. Mike Webb, Earthquake Program Manager, Alaska Division of Emergency Services. These procedures will become effective upon your written acceptance.

If you need clarification of these draft procedures, contact Mr. Webb at 907-428-7022.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Heavilin
Director

REH:MW:lo
Enclosures: as stated

Draft

Alaska Division of Emergency Services Tsunami Sign Procedures

XXXXXX, 1998

BACKGROUND:

The Alaska Division of Emergency Services (DES) has adopted standardized signs for use in tsunami prone areas. Round signs identify evacuation routes and rectangular signs identify hazard zones. These tsunami signs are used in Oregon and are in the process of being adopted in Hawaii, Washington, and California. Common tsunami signage should enhance recognition factors when people are traveling in areas with a tsunami threat in any of the participating states. The signs also serve as an awareness tool to remind Alaskans to plan for, prepare for and mitigate for tsunamis-- Alaska's greatest killer among the natural disasters.

Adoption of common tsunami signage among the states is one of the projects undertaken by the five US states bordering the Pacific Ocean. They are parties to the Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Implementation Plan, a multi-faceted, five-year Congressionally approved and funded federal-state partnership. DES is a member of the State/Federal Steering Committee which oversees the programs and projects undertaken by the Plan.

These Tsunami Sign Procedures have been developed partly in response to requirements set forth by Department of Transportation and Public Facilities (ADOT&PF), Statewide Design and Engineering Services Division in a letter dated February 4, 1998 (Appendix A). These Procedures were approved by ADOT/PF in its letter dated xxxx, 1998 (Appendix B). As requested by ADOT/PF these procedures include DES policy for placement of tsunami signs. The 24-inch diameter round "TSUNAMI EVACUATION ROUTE" sign is approved for installation on state roadways and has been added to the Alaska Sign Design Specifications Manual. The rectangular "TSUNAMI HAZARD ZONE - IN CASE OF EARTHQUAKE GO TO HIGH GROUND OR INLAND" may be installed in ADOT/PF turnouts, parking areas, etc. or critical areas in tsunami evacuation zone(s) such as areas of high population, canneries, docks, marinas, etc. These signs as well as the smaller tsunami evacuation route signs may not be installed along state roadways as they are too small to be comfortably read at road speed.

PROCEDURES:

1. Subject to available funding, DES will provide tsunami highway and informational signs to communities with a "high" or "moderate" threat from distant source tsunamis (Appendix C). Areas in proximity to one or more of these communities and facing a similar tsunami threat are also eligible to participate. In most cases, priority of resources will go to those areas of high threat first. DES reserves the right to make exceptions based upon criteria such as large populations being at risk or a high threat from a local wave even though the area is listed with a moderate or even a low threat to distant tsunamis. Communities or other land managers may purchase or contribute to the purchase of tsunami signs.
2. Unless designated otherwise by the community, for planning purposes, areas less than one-fourth mile from and less than 50-foot elevation above the high tide mark (highest during a

given year) of a tsunami water threat will be deemed a tsunami evacuation zone. Roadways and other evacuation routes leading away from the threat to tsunami shelters or community staging areas that are designated in a community or area disaster plan will be eligible for tsunami evacuation signs. The intent of the evacuation route signs is that they be strategically placed along roadways, trails, boardwalks, etc. so people will be able to follow the signs while under stress to safe locations. The round "TSUNAMI EVACUATION ROUTE" signs are available in 12", 18" and 24". The rectangular informational "TSUNAMI HAZARD ZONE - IN CASE OF EARTHQUAKE GO TO HIGH GROUND OR INLAND" signs are available in 15" x 12", 22 1/2" x 18" and 30" x 24".

3. Communities and other land managers should submit their written requests for tsunami signs to their DES regional representative. These requests should include the following:

- A. Community or area map showing the tsunami evacuation zone(s), proposed evacuation route(s) including locations and type of each sign;
- B. Brief written plan for placement, size, installation and rationale for each sign, and a schedule of prioritization for signs if the total number of signs requested can not be supplied by DES;
- C. Written authorization from appropriate local or area ADOT/PF or other organizations that will accept and install the signs--name of person, address and any special shipping instructions for receiving the signs. (Although DES may make exceptions, the intent is for the community or other land managers to be responsible for installation costs and ensuring that the signs are properly installed.)
- D. Copy of the tsunami evacuation portion of the disaster plan which defines the routes and procedures;
- E. And, any other documentation that DES may deem necessary.

4. DES will determine the availability of funding including signs and transportation costs where applicable. DES is responsible for final prioritization of resources.

5. Plans approved by DES that include tsunami evacuation routes on state roadways will be forwarded by DES to the respective ADOT/PF regional traffic engineer. On state roadways the final placement of all tsunami evacuation signs will require the approval of the ADOT/PF regional traffic engineer. The regional traffic engineer will work through the DES regional representatives and provide DES with written findings on each request.

6. DES will purchase or facilitate the purchase of tsunami signs through the ADOT/PF sign contractor. The contractor will deliver the completed signs to the designated recipients (See 3.C.).