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NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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50th Anniversary of Alaskan Tsunami Reminds Residents to Prepare March 23-29 is Tsunami Preparedness Week

SANTA ANA, California (March 26, 2014) – Thursday, March 27 marks the 50th anniversary since a 9.2 magnitude earthquake struck offshore of Alaska causing a tsunami that spread down the west coast, resulting in 12 deaths in Crescent City, CA. Locally in Orange County, high ocean waves from the 1964 tsunami inundated parts of Seal Beach, Huntington Beach and Newport Beach, causing damage to harbors, as well as flooded homes and businesses.

Since 1812, the coast of California has stood against the destruction of more than two dozen tsunamis. One of which was the tsunami generated from the 9.0 magnitude earthquake in Japan that resulted in one California death and millions of dollars in property damage on the California coast, including damage to Orange County harbors and piers.

In remembrance of the 1964 Alaskan earthquake and Orange County's history of significant damage caused by tsunamis, the Orange County Board of Supervisors proclaimed the week of March 23-29 as Tsunami Preparedness Week.

Residents and businesses along the coast are urged to prepare for tsunamis by practicing their family and business emergency plans, including creating a communication plan and selecting a place to meet on higher ground. However, not only people who live or work along the coast must prepare for tsunamis. One of the key populations emergency management officials are concerned about is the transient population comprised of the thousands of surfers and beach-goers who visit the coast every year from inland areas.

Everyone who visits the coast, whether to live, work or play, should pay extreme attention to tsunami warnings and advisories that are publicly posted, as well as beach closure barricades and signs. At the time of a tsunami warning, the whole coastal community must move to higher ground, away from the ocean. One way that the County and coastal cities will notify the public of a tsunami threat is through the use of AlertOC. This warning system has proved to be vital in keeping injuries and damages to a minimum during the last three tsunami events. All residents should visit AlertOC.com to register their cell phones, business lines and e-mail addresses to receive vital messages during emergencies.

How to survive a tsunami:

- Protect yourself during the earthquake – drop, cover and hold on.
- Move to high ground or inland as soon as you can.
- Stay on higher ground. Waves from a tsunami may arrive for eight hours or longer.
- Follow all instructions from local officials and only return to the coast when an announcement states that it is safe to do so.
- Register alternate phones and e-mail addresses at AlertOC.com.

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