



## **MEDIA RELEASE FROM WAIKATO CIVIL DEFENCE EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT GROUP**

0030 hours, 12 March 2011

### **Waikato's coastal residents urged to monitor tsunami marine threat**

Waikato region's coastal residents are being urged to stay away from the ocean and other waterways after a tsunami marine threat for New Zealand was issued following an earthquake in Japan.

An earthquake measuring 8.9 occurred near the east coast of Honshu, Japan, just before 7pm NZDT yesterday (11 March). A tsunami was generated with reports of waves measuring as high as 7.8 metres affecting coastal Japan.

A marine threat means strong and unusual currents are possible in the sea, harbours, river mouths and estuaries, and unusual wave activity is possible at beaches. Members of the public are advised that the water can move at force and travel up estuaries and coastal rivers.

Waikato Region Civil Defence Emergency Management Group has formally activated to monitor the threat, provide advice to the public as necessary and respond as required.

The Thames Valley Emergency Operating Area (EOA), which covers operations on the region's east coast, and the Waikato Valley EOA, which covers the region's west coast, have also activated.

The EOAs have alerted local agencies and emergency services to the marine threat so they can warn the public and monitor the developing situation.

Waikato Civil Defence group controller Chris McLay urged boaties and swimmers to remain on land while the marine threat is in place.

People should:

- stay off beaches
- stay out of the water (sea, rivers and estuaries, including boating activities)
- not go sightseeing
- share this information with family, neighbours and friends
- listen to the radio and/or TV for updates
- follow the instructions of local Civil Defence authorities.

For more information about tsunami preparedness members of the public should visit [www.waikatoregioncdemg.govt.nz](http://www.waikatoregioncdemg.govt.nz)

Updated information on the marine threat is also available via the Ministry of Civil Defence and Emergency Management's website, <http://www.civildefence.govt.nz>.

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