

FOIA Request #2012-00321

1. Documents that support the conclusion that 784 communities would benefit from becoming TsunamiReady.

NOAA continually works with our state partners in the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP) to identify tsunami at-risk communities in the U.S. (767). The listing below shows a breakout of tsunami at-risk communities as of April 30, 2012.

Number of Communities At-Risk of Tsunamis as of April 30, 2012	
State/Territory	At-Risk Communities
California	158
Oregon	50
Washington	52
Puerto Rico	44
Alaska	75
South Carolina	9
North Carolina	11
Hawaii	4
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands	3
Florida	37
Virginia	26
Georgia	6
Guam	1
American Samoa	1
Texas	11
Louisiana	11
Mississippi	3
Alabama	2
Maryland	17
Delaware	3
New Jersey	9
New York	9
Connecticut	24
Massachusetts	64
Rhode Island	21
New Hampshire	8
Maine	105
U.S. Virgin Islands	3
Total	767

The NTHMP defines a TsunamiReady™ “community” as a coastal local government entity* that has the authority and ability to adopt the TsunamiReady recognition guidelines for the residents and visitors within its jurisdiction.

The NTHMP’s listing of tsunami at-risk/TsunamiReady target communities is updated on an annual basis and is dynamic. Entities approach TsunamiReady implementation differently, which causes the number of at-risk and TsunamiReady communities to periodically fluctuate. For instance, a jurisdiction may take a county-wide approach which would incorporate multiple at-risk communities under a single recognition. Also, communities not identified as at-risk may still pursue TsunamiReady recognition. These factors add to the dynamics of the list. NOAA is committed to remaining flexible to meeting the direction and desires of the local jurisdictions and the NTHMP.

*The term “local government” here means –

- (A) a county, parish (LA), borough (AK), or municipality (PR)
- (B) an incorporated municipality, city, town, or township
- (C) an Indian tribe or authorized tribal organization, or Alaska Native village or organization
- (D) a military installation

2. The basis of the above calculations that the number of TsunamiReady communities will drop from a projected 140 communities to only 115 over the next five fiscal years due to the reductions proposed in the NOAA FY13 budget.

NOAA based its projected TsunamiReady targets on the program’s historical trends. Since 2000, NWS has recognized an average of eight (8) communities as TsunamiReady each year.

TsunamiReady program remains entirely voluntary. NTHMP infrastructure support grants have influenced this average. However, with the reduction of grant assistance, some communities will decide not to participate.

NOAA assessed the number of communities currently receiving NTHMP funding and not yet to be recognized and estimated the number of communities which will voluntarily participate without grant assistance to arrive at a target of three (3) recognized communities per year for its TsunamiReady program when federal NTHMP grants are no longer available.

NOAA will continue its historical level to support the TsunamiReady program, utilizing staff at coastal NWS offices in partnership with state and local Emergency Management officials.

Performance Goals and Measurement Data:

Performance Measure:	FY 12 Target	FY 13 Target	FY 14 Target	FY 15 Target	FY 16 Target	FY 17 Target
Tsunami Ready Communities						
With decrease	100	103	106	109	112	115
Without decrease	100	108	116	124	132	140

3. Any estimates of the number of lives that may be saved and monetary damages avoided by a community being TsunamiReady in the event of a tsunami.

As an agency, we have grappled with the viability of a rigorous metric that could identify the number of lives we save from extreme weather. Computing such a metric involves measuring many different variables, including how many people heard the warning, how many took appropriate action, how many people were in the tsunami inundation zone and moved out of the way, etc. It is a laborious, expensive, and time-consuming process that requires consistent and quality data. One difficulty is the geographical size of a tsunami, and the need for tens of thousands of reliably reports to provide statistically significant results.