

NGDC Tsunami Data Fact Sheet

What is a tsunami?

A tsunami is a series of large waves generated by an undersea disturbance near the coast or in the ocean. The waves, which can travel across oceans, can be extremely dangerous and damaging when they reach the shore. Tsunamis are generated by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, underwater landslides and occasionally other processes, such as meteorites.

*Since 1690, more than **200 tsunami events** have affected the United States and its territories, causing more than **700 deaths** and **\$300 million** in economic loss*

Have tsunamis impacted the United States?

Yes! While damaging tsunamis don't happen very often, the impacts can be devastating. Tsunamis have caused fatalities, damage and significant economic loss to large sections of U.S. coastlines.

Why are tsunami data important?

An effective tsunami warning system relies on the free and open exchange and long-term management of high quality global data and science products to mitigate, model and forecast tsunamis.

What data are required and what has been collected?

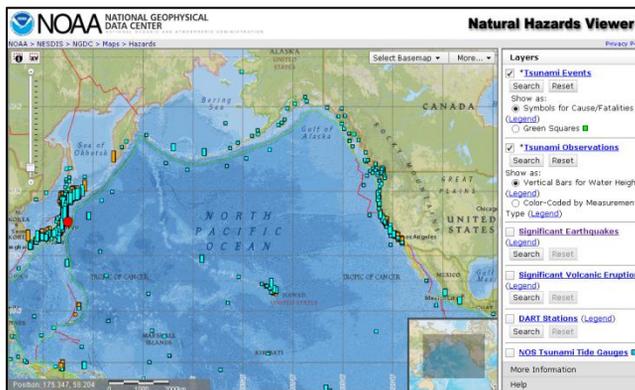
- Global historical tsunami data
- Tsunami field survey data
- Damage photographs
- Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunamis (DART) data
- High resolution coastal tide gauge data

What does the National Geophysical Data Center (NGDC) do?

NGDC is the global data and information service for tsunamis. Long-term data management consists of analyses and oversight to meet our users needs. This includes documenting measurement and processing practices; providing feedback on observing system performances; comparisons between data for validation; reprocessing and recommending corrective action for sub-optimal systems. Collaboration among system developers, users, data centers and researchers—within, and external to NOAA—strengthen our data stewardship. These data are accessible via interactive maps, web-form interfaces, KML files and XML web services.



1964 Tsunami damage, Resurrection Bay, Alaska



Natural Hazards Interactive Map Viewer

<http://ngdc.noaa.gov/hazard/tsu.shtml>