



Tsunami Preparedness

Virginia has over 3,000 thousand miles of estuarine shoreline; areas are at greater risk if they are less than 25-feet above sea level and within a mile of the shoreline. Thus, the Eastern Shore and the cities of Chesapeake, Virginia Beach, Hampton, Newport News, Portsmouth, Poquoson, and Norfolk, including surrounding coastal localities, are particularly vulnerable.

Tsunami Threat

York County's tsunami threat is mainly confined to the coastal and beach areas along the York and Poquoson Rivers, and those coastal areas of York County that border the Chesapeake Bay. All of the coastal areas in York County are susceptible to tsunamis. Most of the coastal areas bordered by the waters of the Chesapeake Bay, York River, and Poquoson River to include the Yorktown Beach and the Riverwalk Landing development in Yorktown are included within the hazard zone. York County topography rises from near sea level at the beach to approximately 102 feet in the Lightfoot and Skimino area; however, effects of structures and topography may locally affect the inland extent of the tsunami (runup). Residents and businesses along the coastline should consider preparedness measures that are similar to that for storm surge.

The National Weather Service (NWS) Forecast Office in Wakefield, Virginia receives Tsunami Watch and Warning Messages via NWS communication systems. Upon receipt, the message is reviewed and edited for the local service area and re-transmitting over the Emergency Alert System (EAS) and NOAA All-Hazards Weather Radio.