



NEWS RELEASE

Haida Gwaii Communities Paint Utility Poles to Direct People To Safety

March 22nd, 2019

In 2018, as part of Haida Gwaii's Tsunami Pole Project, utility poles across Haida Gwaii, including communities within the North Coast Regional District (NCRD) electoral areas D and E, were painted with signs to direct residents and visitors of Haida Gwaii to safety in the event of a tsunami.

"Clear visual markings that can direct people to safe zones may save lives if our community experiences a tsunami" said Barry Pages, Chair of the NCRD, adding "once the shaking from an earthquake stops, everyone should immediately move to high ground and follow the utility poles to safe areas."

The Tsunami Pole Project aims to reduce the risk of injury and/or fatality in the event of a tsunami by utilizing existing BC Hydro poles to paint visual indicators of inundation zones and safe zones in communities across Haida Gwaii. The painted signage is designed to instruct visitors and residents on where the hazard zones are and where it is safe to go in the event of a tsunami.

The Tsunami Pole Project is the first of its kind. It is an innovative and collaborative project with involvement from the Province of B.C., BC Hydro, TELUS, local First Nations, and municipal governments on Haida Gwaii. By working in partnership to utilize existing infrastructure and source grant funding for the Tsunami Pole Project, governments are able to provide an added layer of tsunami preparedness at a low cost.

The tsunami poles that were painted in 2018 were identified as part of an overall [research study](#), undertaken in 2017, that included a tsunami hazard analysis and geographic information system (GIS) mapping to identify the hazard and safe zones in each community and outline which poles to paint.

“We know that a prepared community is a resilient community,” said Evan Putterill, NCRD Electoral Area E Director. “Painting visual markings on utility poles are one way we hope to prepare our community and bring awareness to the tsunami risks that are present.”

In the coming weeks, informational signage will be installed along highways and main arterial roads in communities on Haida Gwaii which will provide further context to the painted poles for visitors. Informational collateral will also be supplied at visitor information centres and other popular tourist locations across the island.



Tsunami Danger Zone



Tsunami Safe Zone



Highway Signage

Every April, Tsunami Preparedness Week is a reminder that B.C. is a seismically active province, and that the threat posed from a damaging tsunami constitutes a reality for coastal communities. We hope you will take some time that week to familiarize yourself with your communities’ tsunami pole signage and champion your own personal emergency preparedness plan at home with your families.

Learn more:

- North Coast Regional District: <https://www.ncrdbc.com>
- Tsunami Preparedness Week: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PSSG0021-000593>
- Prepared BC Earthquake and Tsunami Guide: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/public-safety-and-emergency-services/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/embc/preparedbc/preparedbc-guides/earthquake_and_tsunami_guide_2018_web.pdf

For more information contact Daniel Fish, Corporate Officer for the North Coast Regional District at 250.624.2002, extension 2 or email corporateofficer@ncrdbc.com.