

## Editorials

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### Editorial: Smart planning for a tsunami in Grays Harbor

A deep tremor in the Pacific Ocean could roll ashore in less than 30 minutes with devastating impacts. One school district is taking action.

Seattle Times Editorial



KUDOS to the Ocosta School District in Grays Harbor County for taking the lead on including tsunami protections in its school rebuilding plan.

School administrators and residents of Westport, Grayland and other communities in this beautiful but vulnerable setting on the Pacific Ocean deserve credit for planning for the worst.

Times reporter Sandi Doughton described how the district will offer the first U.S. vertical tsunami refuge. Plans call for construction of a school facility that is tall enough and stout enough to shelter 1,500 people from an ocean surge triggered by a tsunami.

The Cascadia subduction zone is a 700-mile offshore fault, which has coastal communities in Washington and Oregon contemplating how to prepare for a devastating quake and the lethal wave that follows.

Coastal communities have been identifying evacuation routes and meeting areas as they anticipate the need to flee a surging tsunami. A new awareness and a new vocabulary, such as inundation lines — how far inland the water would flow — are part of the ongoing preparation.

Washington's coastal communities are invoked as examples of the subtleties of the hazards. Aberdeen is at risk, but the community has higher ground nearby. Ocean Shores, about half the population, has no higher ground close by.

The Ocosta School District needed to shelter people in place. The community has worked to find extra resources to supplement the \$14 million approved by voters.

This is a worthy investment that sets an excellent example for others who face the same threat.