

CAMP MURRAY – Washington’s April 6 test of 32 coastal tsunami alert and warning loudspeakers was an overwhelming success, according to John Schelling, manager, Washington Emergency Management Division’s (WEMD) earthquake and tsunami program.

“Field reports indicated the satellite transmission successfully activated and played an audible test message at all 32 loudspeaker sites. The alert message was initiated from the WEMD’s Alert and Warning Center at Camp Murray and was transmitted in seconds to sites that were hundreds of miles apart along the Washington coast and Strait of Juan de Fuca,” said Schelling.

“Washington state has worked steadily since the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami disaster to provide better alert and warning to coastal residents and visitors who are outdoors in the beach areas. Monday’s test demonstrated that the satellite system can provide timely as well as audible warnings to coastal residents and visitors,” he said. Schelling also noted this system is designed to alert those who may be outdoors and reiterated the need for coastal residents to purchase a NOAA weather radio to obtain warnings while inside.

He added, “Another important aspect of Monday’s test was that it began a series of monthly tests to be conducted by state and local jurisdictions. These tests will ensure that the system can be depended upon to provide critical alert and warning to Washington’s coastal areas.”

WEMD’s tsunami program has plans to expand the AHAB warning system this summer. The expansion will include installation of eight additional sirens in cities, counties, and tribal reservations along the outer coast and inland waterways.

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