



## Media Advisory

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## Bay Area Coast-side Residents Can Call 211 for Tsunami Information

SAN FRANCISCO, March 11, 2011 – Residents in the San Francisco Bay Area, who are concerned about the local impact of tsunami waves generated by the 8.9 earthquake off Japan early this morning, can call 211 for information about areas that are being evacuated, shelters and evacuation centers, and check points for boat owners.

Residents are discouraged from calling 911 unless they are experiencing a life-threatening emergency. During times of disaster, the 211 Bay Area helplines provide critical information to local residents, relieving 911 operators from answering non-emergency calls.

“Our 211 Bay Area call center is actively communicating today with the Offices of Emergency Services for Marin, San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Cruz Counties, so that we can provide residents with the most current information about evacuation areas, road closings and other coastal warnings,” said Helen Rosen, vice president of operations for United Way’s 211 call center. “Our phone lines have been quite busy, and we encourage residents to call 211 for tsunami information, so that 911 operators can remain focused on life-threatening emergencies.”

211 providers all along the California coast are also providing information to residents in their areas, including call centers in Los Angeles, Monterey, San Diego, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Sonoma and Ventura counties.

211 is free, confidential and available 24 hours a day in more than 150 languages. Residents who cannot dial 211 should call 800-273-6222 to reach a local 211 call center. For the hearing impaired, dial 711 or 415-808-4440 (TTY).

NOTE: B-roll video footage of the 211 call center is available upon request.

### About 211

211 is an easy-to-remember, toll-free phone number that connects callers with local community services, such as food, shelter, counseling, employment assistance, quality child care and more. During a disaster, 211 provides critical information about evacuation routes, food and shelter, as well as support with finding new jobs and permanent housing during long-term recovery. 211 is confidential and available 24 hours a day in more than 150 languages. The 211 Bay Area Regional Partnership is operated by Contra Costa Crisis Center, Eden I&R, United Way of the Bay Area, United Way Silicon Valley, and United Way of the Wine Country. 211 is available in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma Counties. For more information, visit [www.211BayArea.org](http://www.211BayArea.org).

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