

## 6 Staying Prepared for Natural Disasters

June to October is heavy rain and typhoon season in Japan and during this time, the rain and wind may cause damage beyond expectation, such as floods, landslides, and high tides. Moreover, Japan is the most earthquake-prone country in the world, so it is important that you stay prepared for natural disasters.



### 1) Preparing for heavy rain and typhoons

When heavy rains or a typhoon is approaching, be sure to stay prepared by following the instructions below:

1. Regularly check weather forecasts (radio, TV, etc).
2. Have things ready to take in case of an evacuation, such as food, water, regular medicines, and valuables (money, bank book and ATM card, passport, etc). To help stop the spread of infectious diseases, make sure to also bring masks, disinfecting wipes, a thermometer, etc. As there may be power or gas outages, be sure you have enough food, water, and other essential supplies for at least three days.
3. Check beforehand where your local emergency evacuation shelters are using hazard maps, the City of Hiroshima Disaster Prevention Portal (<http://www.bousai.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/>), etc.
4. Have flashlights and a radio ready in case of a power outage.
5. Items such as flowerpots and laundry poles may be blown away. Keep them inside or secure them so they cannot move.
6. Take part in community disaster drills to stay prepared.



### 2) Disaster Warning Levels

Hiroshima City has 5 warning levels to let citizens know about the risk of a disaster and when they should evacuate. If **Level 4** is announced, **all people who live in disaster-prone areas or who feel they are in danger should evacuate immediately.**

**Note:** Check Landslide and Flood Hazard Maps published by the City of Hiroshima to see if your home is at risk.

Warning Level	What you should do	Other information
1	Stay aware of weather reports and stay prepared for emergencies.	<b>Early Warning Information</b> (早期注意情報//Sōki Chūi Jōhō)
2	Make sure you know where to evacuate and how to get there.	<b>Flood Advisory</b> (洪水注意報//Kōzui Chūi Hō) <b>Heavy Rains Advisory</b> (大雨注意報//Ōame Chūi Hō)
3	<b>All elderly residents (etc) should evacuate</b> <b>Those who need more time, such as the elderly, should begin evacuation.</b>	<b>Evacuation Preparation and Advisory for the Elderly and People With Limited Mobility</b> (避難準備//Hinan Junbi 高齢者等避難開始//Kōreisha-Tō Hinan Kaishi)
4	<b>Evacuate immediately</b> <b>If you live in a disaster-prone area or feel you are in danger, go to an evacuation site immediately.</b> If it is dangerous to go to an evacuation site, go to a nearby safe place.	<b>Evacuation Advisory</b> (避難勧告 Hinan Kankoku) <b>Evacuation Orders (Emergency)</b> (避難指示//Hinan Shiji (緊急//Kinkyū))
5	<b>Disaster in progress</b> Do what you think is best to protect yourself and the safety of everyone around you. <b>Note:</b> Level 5 might not be announced.	<b>Disaster in Progress Announcement</b> (災害発生情報//Saigai Hassei Jōhō)

### 3) Preparing for earthquakes

We cannot predict when earthquakes will happen. Stay prepared beforehand by doing the following:

1. Secure your furniture so that it does not fall over.
2. Do not place anything near your stove that burns easily.
3. Discuss with your family or others that you are close with both where you will evacuate and how you will contact each other (such as 171 Disaster Emergency Dial).
4. Have things ready to take in case of an evacuation, such as food, water, regular medicines, and valuables (money, bank book and ATM card, passport, etc). To help stop the spread of infectious diseases, make sure to also bring masks, disinfecting wipes, a thermometer, etc. As there may be power or gas outages, be sure you have enough food, water, and other essential supplies for at least three days.
5. Be aware of any features of your local area that might affect you in a disaster.
6. Check where evacuation sites are and how to get to them.
7. Actively participate in emergency drills run by volunteer disaster preparedness organization.

### 4) What to do if an earthquake occurs

When an earthquake occurs, stay calm and do the following:

1. Take shelter under a table.
2. Extinguish any flames (stoves, candles, etc) after earthquake tremors have stopped.
3. Open doors to make sure you can leave.
4. If a fire has spread, quickly extinguish it.
5. Be careful of broken glass inside your home.
6. Do not run outside in a panic.
7. Stay away from front gates and walls.
8. Check on your neighbors.
9. Work together to help people.
10. Get accurate information from television or radio.



### Useful Apps for Disaster Prevention



**Safety tips** is a free app that sends you notifications when the following are issued: emergency earthquake alerts, tsunami warnings, volcanic eruption alerts, special weather warnings, and civil protection alerts. It has many features that are useful in disasters. It is available in 15 languages, including English, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Spanish, Portuguese, Vietnamese, and Tagalog.



**Hiroshima City Emergency Evacuation Guide** is a free app that alerts users to the appropriate evacuation measures to take before disasters occur. When emergency information, such as evacuation orders, is announced, you can check how hazardous your current location is, as well as the best route to your closest emergency evacuation site. Available in English, Chinese (traditional and simplified), Korean, and Japanese.



iOS



Android

## 5) Evacuation Sites and Shelters

When ward offices, the police, the fire department, or disaster prevention organizations make an announcement about evacuations, or if your home is in danger of collapse or fire, assess your situation and evacuate to a safe place if necessary.

### 1. Designated Emergency Evacuation Sites

Sites for disaster victims to immediately evacuate to in dangerous situations. Evacuation sites differ according to the type of disaster. Disasters are categorized as landslides, floods, high tides, earthquakes, tsunamis, and large-scale fires.

### 2. Designated Evacuation Shelters

These facilities provide temporary lodging and shelter for people who have lost their homes. It is important that, before a disaster happens, you contact your local ward office (see page 32), fire station (see page 35), or other similar institution to find out where these shelters are. Visit these evacuation shelters and inspect the routes to get there, so you know about possible dangers when evacuating.

**You can search for public evacuation sites and disaster prevention information on the following sites:**

- Hiroshima City Disaster Prevention Portal  
(<http://www.bousai.city.hiroshima.lg.jp/>)



- Hiroshima Prefecture Disaster Prevention Web  
(<http://www.bousai.pref.hiroshima.jp>).



You do not need to use public evacuation sites; talk to relatives and friends in advance about evacuating to their homes or other safe places.

## 6) When you evacuate:

1. Before evacuating, check again that all flames are extinguished (close main gas valves and turn off the electricity at the fuse box).
2. Take information with you, including the location of emergency evacuation sites and how to let your family/friends (etc) know your whereabouts, etc.
3. Take clothing that is easy to move in and something to protect your head.
4. Carry emergency items that you will need in a backpack.
5. If it is not safe to go to an evacuation site, evacuate to a higher floor in a tall, sturdy building instead.
6. Avoid narrow streets, areas near fences or walls, and riverbanks.



## 7) Medical and Emergency Cards for International Residents

Medical and Emergency Cards are useful during disasters and other emergencies for people who are not confident in their Japanese abilities. A blank copy of the card is available on page 47 of this guidebook for you to use. You can also download it from the City of Hiroshima website. For details, contact the Human Rights Education Division (**Tel:** 082-504-2165).