

## **Typhoons and Heavy Rain**

The typhoon season usually occurs between the months of June and September, but they can unexpectedly occur any time of the year. Typhoons always have strong to extremely strong gusts of wind accompanied by lots of rain. They usually last for a couple of days. Even without a typhoon, heavy rain can cause landslides and flooding, so it is important to stay away from cliffs, coastal areas, and river banks during these times.

During the last major disaster in Kagoshima, around two meters of rain fell, several people died, the damage was severe, and it took months to clean up. The damage isn't always extreme, but homes have been destroyed and a few people have lost their lives. Finding out about when a typhoon is coming will be easy as it will be on the news and your office co-workers will be talking about it.

Typhoons severely disrupt travelling arrangements. Flights and ferries will be cancelled. If you know a typhoon is coming, try to change your flight/ferry time by a few days before or after.

### What To Do

1. Typhoons can and will change directions unexpectedly, so maintain vigilance and keep yourself updated with the latest news. Don't underestimate the chance of a typhoon affecting you wherever you might be!
2. Secure any items you have outside or bring them in. Tie everything else down.
3. If you have storm shutters, close them. Most windows have safety wire running through them to prevent shattering; otherwise, tape a big X on windows with duct tape.
4. Don't go outside if possible. There will be flying debris and, in worst case scenarios, downed live electrical wires. Avoid the beach and other exposed places. You can and will be literally swept off your feet. Even after the storm passes, steep slopes, cliffs, and river banks are prone to landslides. If you live close to these areas, you may need to evacuate.
5. Fill your bath with water before the typhoon comes in case the water goes out. (Use for bathing, flushing, etc.)
6. Stock up with food and water that will last you a couple of days. This is especially true for island ALTs, as the ferries supplying the supermarkets might be disrupted.
7. Make sure people know where you are. Your office or school may want to contact you.

## **Tsunami**

Tsunamis are a series of large sea waves usually caused by earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, or landslides. They can potentially cause extensive damage and loss of life. Tsunamis may hit before warnings are issued, so if a large, local earthquake occurs, evacuate coastal areas immediately. If a tsunami warning of 3 meters or higher is issued, evacuate from coastal and river areas immediately and continue moving to higher and higher ground whenever possible. Additional information can be found [here](#).

## **Earthquakes**

*We are pretty lucky in Kagoshima. For those of you who have never had the pleasure of being knocked to the floor by a quake, don't worry too much cause you probably won't have that experience here either. While common in the rest of Japan, major earthquakes are very rare down here. Nevertheless, it is wise to know what to do if one does occur (because even though it is rare, it is not impossible). Just follow the following instructions if one occurs:*

### Before the Shakes

- 1. To avoid injuries from falling household items, secure them to the wall. They sell cabinet clips that will keep doors closed in the event of an earthquake*
- 2. Prepare an emergency kit in advance.*

### During the Quake

- 1. Remain calm.*
- 2. Cover your head with a pillow or helmet. If none of these are available, use your hands to cover your head.*
- 3. Turn off gas lines and extinguish all flames. Secure an exit by opening a door and then seek cover.*
- 4. Get under a doorway or table. This type of reinforced space is relatively safer.*
- 5. Stay away from windows.*
- 6. Wait where you are until the quake is over.*

### After The Shaking Stops

- 1. Turn off all heating devices such as ovens or stoves and extinguish all flames. Tremors have a tendency to displace gas lines and an open flame can be dangerous.*
- 2. Contact your office.*
- 3. Don't go outside with bare feet. It is likely that there will be broken glass.*
- 4. Stay away from downed electrical lines.*
- 5. After a big quake there are often after-shocks. Take necessary precautions to ensure your safety.*

## **Volcanic Eruptions**

*How many prefectures get to include this section? Mt. Sakurajima (the volcano in the middle of Kinko Bay) and Mt. Shinmoedake (in Kirishima) are active volcanos.*

*Shinmoedake erupted in 2011 and Sakurajima's last big eruption was in 1914—lava flowed for three days, Kagoshima City had to be completely evacuated, and the ash buried houses.*

*Although unlikely, if Sakurajima or any other volcano in Kagoshima should erupt, you will hear sirens bells to alert everyone. The city and national government suggest the following:*

### What To Do

- 1. Remain calm.*
- 2. Stay indoors. Close windows.*
- 3. Turn on your TV to get more information.*
- 4. Contact your office for guidance. (Contacting the fire or police department is suggested, but if you don't speak Japanese this is not a viable option.)*
- 5. If you must go outside, grab your emergency kit and put on a helmet, shoes, goggles and face mask.*
- 6. If time permits, place all electronic items in large plastic bags and tape them shut. Ash can destroy electronics and is especially harmful to computers.*
- 7. When instructed go to a designated meeting place, shelter, or seaport.*
- 8. In the event of a serious eruption, proceed to the closest evacuation point. Each ward has a supervisor who knows how to handle the situation. Know this information and location in advance.*