

English

Disaster Prevention Handbook for Foreign Nationals

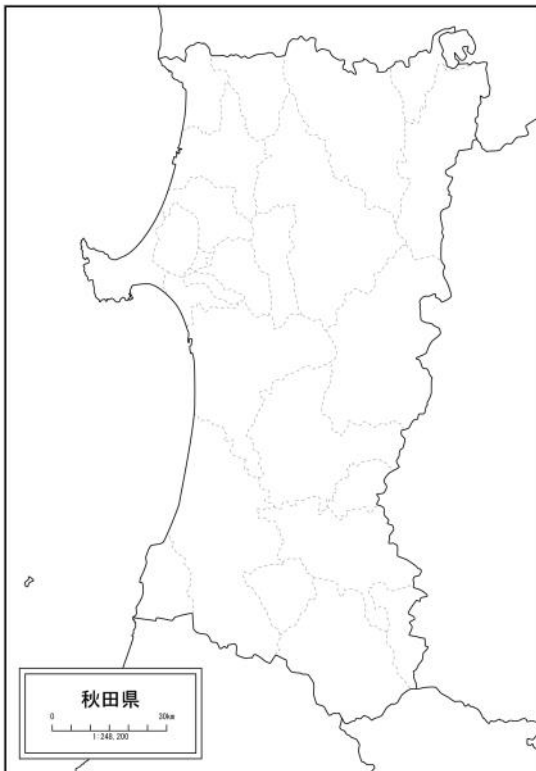


Public Interest Incorporated Foundation
Akita International Association

Preface

In Japan, there is a saying: natural calamities appear when they have been forgotten. A natural calamity is a disaster that occurs due to the power of nature. Disasters can occur at any time. By preparing for disasters before they happen, you can reduce the damage as much as possible, and protect yourself, your family, and others important to you.

This handbook contains a lot of useful information, including information about types of disasters, how to prepare for a disaster, what to do when a disaster occurs, and more. Please use this handbook as a reference as you think about how to protect yourself and your loved ones.



Do you know where the municipality you live in is located?

Disaster news often appears alongside a map. If you remember where the region you live in is located, it will make disaster information easier to understand.

Large scale disasters have previously occurred in Akita Prefecture



1983 Sea of Japan earthquake (May 26th, 1983)



Heavy rain of July, 2017



Heavy snowfall of January, 2021



Heavy rain of July, 2023

Table of Contents

Preface/Table of Contents

Learning about natural disaster Earthquakes..2

Shindo and the perceived shaking.....4

Tsunami5

Typhoons/Heavy rain/flooding.....6

Heavy snow7

Landslide disasters8

Preparing for disasters

Acquiring disaster information.....9

How to evacuate10

Emergency supplies
(supplies to prepare in case there is a disaster)12

Japanese used during a disaster.....14

Marks for locations used for evacuation
/How to use public telephones.....15

Checking on safety (whether people are safe or not)
/Disaster prevention memo16

Learning about natural disasters

Earthquakes

An earthquake is when the ground shakes violently. Large earthquakes can destroy buildings, so they are very dangerous. Furthermore, after the first shaking, there can be numerous further earthquakes known as aftershocks.



〈Earthquake vocabulary〉

- Magnitude...The size of the earthquake
- Shindo (degree of shaking)...The degree of shaking caused by the earthquake
Even with the same earthquake, the shindo will vary based on the location
- Epicenter...The point at the center of the earthquake
(below the ground surface)

Things to be careful of once the shaking starts

●When you are at home

- Hide beneath a table, desk, or something similar.
- Protect your head.
- Wait until the shaking stops.



Once the shaking stops

- Extinguish any flames.
- Secure an escape route, such as by opening a door or window.
- When you evacuate to a place other than your home, turn off the electric breaker.
If the electricity is on, there is a possibility it could cause a fire.



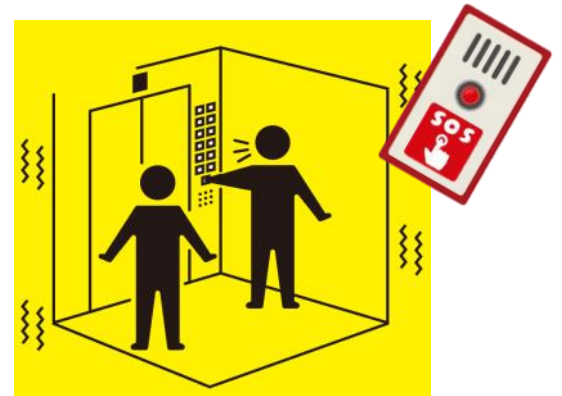
●When you are outside

- Get away from things that could collapse and fall, such as concrete block walls or billboards.



●When you are inside an elevator

- Push the buttons for all floors. Get out on whatever floor the elevator stops at.
- If the door does not open, push the emergency button.



●When you are driving a car

- Pull over to the left side of the road and stop the car.
- At times when being inside a car is dangerous, leave the car behind and escape on foot. At that time, do not lock the car doors, and leave the key inside the car.



●When you are inside transportation such as a bus or train

- Hold tightly onto safety handles or railings.

●When you are inside a crowded facility

- Without panicking, follow the directions of the facility staff.



Shindo and the perceived shaking



Shindo 0	No shaking is felt.
Shindo 1	When inside a room, some people can feel a small amount of shaking.
Shindo 2	When inside a room, many people will feel shaking. Hanging objects swing and shake around.
Shindo 3	When inside a room, most people will feel shaking.
Shindo 4	Some unstable objects will fall over. Hanging objects will swing and shake around significantly.
Weak Shindo 5	Unstable furniture will fall over, and objects such as dishes and books will fall out. Some concrete block walls may collapse.
Strong Shindo 5	Heavy furniture may fall over. Walking is difficult.
Weak Shindo 6	Standing is impossible. Doors may become jammed and unable to be opened. Walls, window glass, and other parts of buildings may be destroyed. Unsecured furniture will move around.
Strong Shindo 6	It is impossible to move without crawling. Some houses may collapse.
Shindo 7	It is impossible to move. Many houses may collapse. Roads may also collapse.

Tsunami

Sometimes an earthquake may cause a tsunami (a large wave). Tsunami can come immediately after an earthquake occurs. Large tsunami can wash away even things like cars and buildings.



Things to be careful of

- When you are near the sea, a river, or other such bodies of water
Evacuate immediately to a high elevation location.
- When you are near the mountains
Rocks may fall from above. Stay away from cliffs.
- Even if an earthquake did not happen nearby, there is still the possibility of a tsunami
Gather information from sources such as television or radio.
- When you feel that it is dangerous to remain in your home
Evacuate to a location, such as an evacuation area or shelter (page 15), that is higher in elevation than your home.

〈Tsunami warnings/advisories〉

Information released by **the Japan Meteorological Agency**. When an earthquake occurs, and a tsunami will come, large tsunami warnings and tsunami advisories are announced through mediums such as television.

Types of warnings /advisories	Predicted height of the tsunami	
	Announcement by number (announcement standards)	Language for describing tsunami size
Large tsunami warning	More than 10 meters	Huge
	10m	
	5m	
Tsunami warning	3m	High
Tsunami advisory	1m	—

Typhoons

Typhoons most often appear from August until October. As a typhoon passes, very strong winds will blow, and heavy rain will fall.



Things to be careful of

- Do not go outside
- If there are things outside your home that could be blown away, put them inside
- It is possible that window glass may break, so close curtains in order to prevent injury
- Power outages may also occur, so prepare flashlights

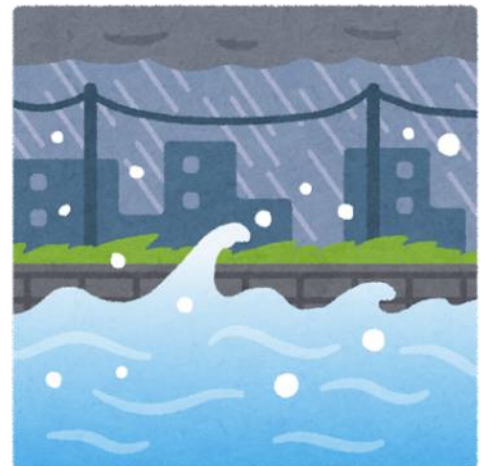
Heavy rain/flooding

There are times where rain may continue to fall for long periods of time, or where a huge amount of rain may fall in a short period of time. If there is a lot of rainfall, then the water in rivers may overflow. There are even times when houses may be submerged or swept away.

When a lot of rain falls in the same location over a short period of time, it is known as a concentrated torrential downpour.

Heavy rain is especially likely at times such as the end of the rainy season (from June to July) and at the time of a typhoon.

During heavy rain, there are also times where the act of going to an evacuation shelter can be dangerous. At such times, please go to the safest room in the building you are in.



Things to be careful of

- Do not go outside unless you are evacuating
- Do not go near features such as rivers or mountains
- Do not go anywhere by car
- When the water is deep enough that it reaches around the area of an adult's knees, do not go anywhere by walking

Heavy snow

Akita experiences a lot of snowfall during the winter.

Things to be careful of

- Transportation, such as busses and trains, may stop
- Bicycles, motorbikes, and so on cannot be used
- Wear shoes that do not slip easily
- Change your car tires to studless tires
- Beware of falling icicles when walking under overhangs
- When not using running water, drain your water pipes (the method for draining your pipes differs depending on the house, apartment, etc. where you live, so confirm the method ahead of time)



Icicles

They can cause severe injury by falling and piercing the head or other body parts

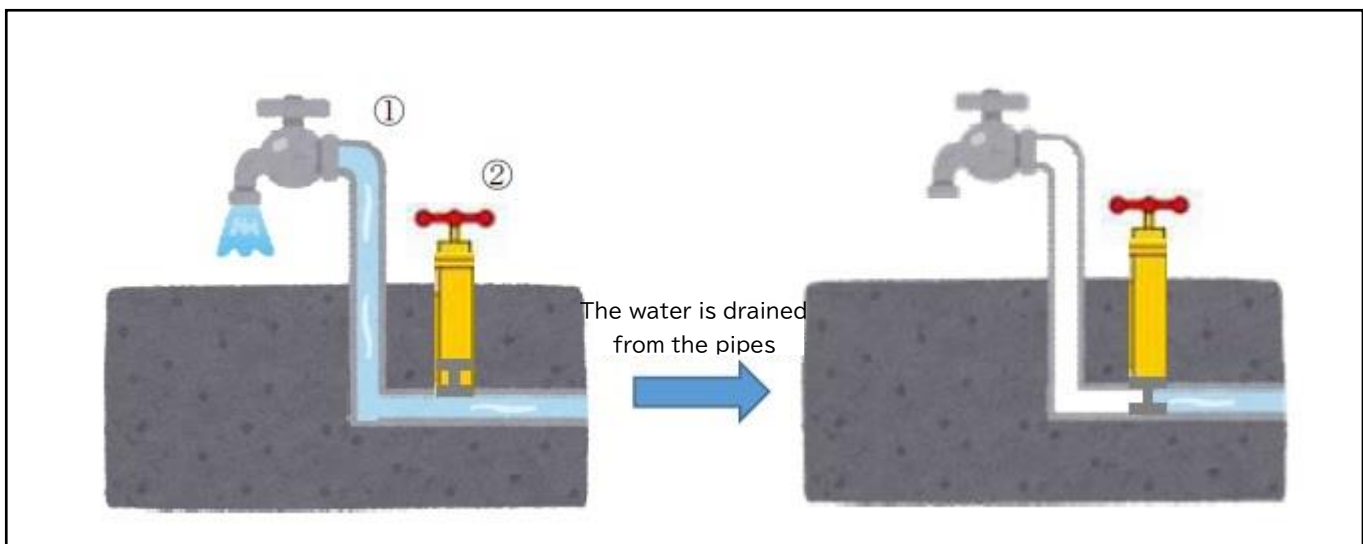


Studless tires

The grooves are deeper than normal tires, but also have fine, shallow grooves. Even during snowfall, or when the road is frozen, they will not slip easily. Studless tires have **STUDLESS** written on the side of the tire.



Draining water pipes



Landslide disasters

At times such as heavy rain or earthquakes, weakened earthen slopes can collapse into a landslide.



Regarding cautionary levels and evacuation in times of heavy rain and landslide disasters

This information is released by **municipalities**.

For windstorm and flood disasters, as well as landslide disasters, 5 levels of evacuation information are used. You can check the information through television, internet, apps, and other sources.

Cautionary level	What to do	Evacuation information will be displayed in these ways
5	Do whatever you can immediately to secure your own safety	Emergency Safety Measures
4	Everyone should evacuate Evacuate from dangerous areas as soon as possible to an evacuation area or other safe place	Evacuation Order
3	Those who take extra time to evacuate, such as elderly or disabled people, should evacuate All others should prepare in the event that they need to evacuate	Evacuation for the Elderly, etc.
2	Reconfirm your evacuation methods (how you will evacuate if needed)	
1	Be on the watch for new information	

Preparing for disasters

Acquiring disaster information

If a disaster occurs, turn on the television or radio.

You can also get disaster information from sources such as disaster prevention tools and apps.

●Akita Prefectural Disaster Prevention Portal Site

This is a website that provides various kinds of information that is useful at the time of a disaster. You can view information about weather, evacuation, and more in multiple languages.



URL

<https://www.bousai-akita.jp/>



●NHK World Japan

You can view NHK news in multiple languages. You can also get information about disasters. This is a free app.

For Android



For iPhone



●Safety Tips

You can get information about disasters in multiple languages. This is a free app.



Android版



iOS版



Safety Tips logo

(Source: Japanese Tourism Agency homepage)

How to evacuate

In case there is a disaster, check beforehand the best methods for evacuating, and where you should evacuate to.

●Check hazard maps

These are maps that illustrate dangerous areas where disasters may occur, evacuation areas, and more. They are created by municipalities. You should check the hazard map for the municipality you live in. You can check it on the municipality homepage.



In the case of a large municipality, there will be maps for each area

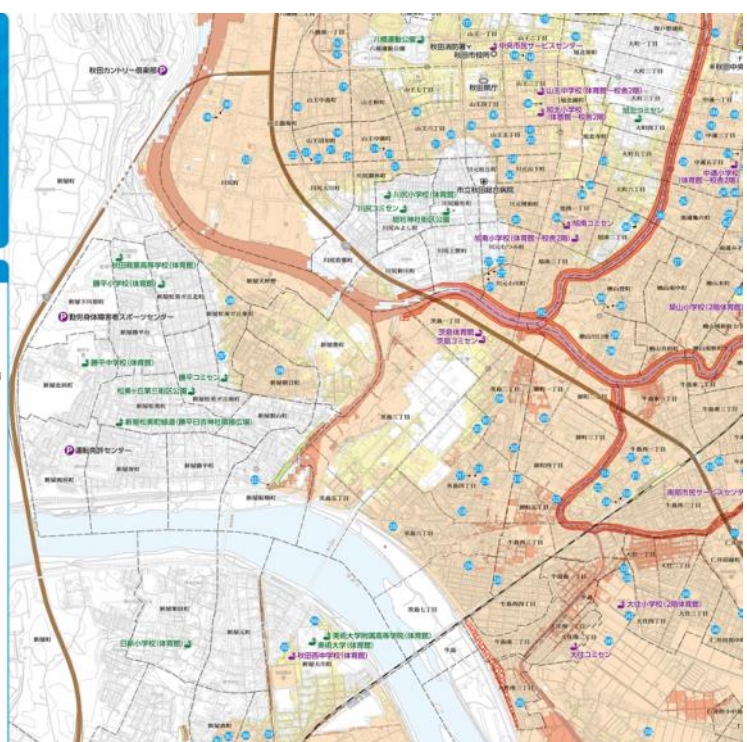
秋田市 水害ハザードマップ⑥
 山王・中通・南通・川尻・楢山・茨島・東通・横森・桜・新屋・浜田・牛島・仁井田・御所野など

危険度	浸水想定	土砂災害警戒区域	避難場所	避難経路	タイミング
レベル	メータ	内	外		

●特に関心が必要な地域
 ●浸水した場合に想定される水深

指定緊急避難場所

- 下北中学校(体育館)
- 千秋公園
- 八橋運動公園
- 中央市民サービスセンター
- 下北コモン
- 山王中学校(体育館・校舎2階)
- ノースアジア大学明拓高等学校グラウンド
- 旭北小学校(体育館・校舎2階)
- 旭北コモン
- 秋田市民交流プラザ
- 城東中学校(2階体育館)
- 東小学校(体育館)
- ノースアジア大学グラウンド
- 中通小学校(体育館・校舎2階)
- 川尻小学校(体育館)
- 東コモン
- 川尻コモン



●Going to an evacuation area

- Places such as elementary schools, middle schools, and community centers become evacuation shelters during disasters
- Anyone can use these shelters free of charge
- You can also receive food and drinks
- There are also blankets, places to sleep, etc. (in some cases the places to sleep may be hard floors)
- You can get information about disasters, daily life, and so on



Evacuation shelter mark



●Manners and rules at evacuation shelters

- There is a reception area, so be sure to write your own name and other needed information there. When you take actions such as returning home or going to a different evacuation shelter, inform reception.
- The times, amounts, etc. for food distribution are set. When a line forms, line up to receive your food in order.
- Since many people must live together in the same place, avoid using loud voices.

●How to dress when evacuating

- Avoid exposing your skin by wearing long sleeves and pants
- Wear gloves
- Wear shoes that you are used to and that are easy to walk in
- Cover your head with a helmet, hat, or other covering
- Put your things in a rucksack to carry with you



●Things to be careful of when evacuating

- Wear safe clothing that is easy to move around in, and shoes that are easy to walk in as you evacuate. During a flood, do not wear long boots. Water can get inside the boots and make it difficult to walk.
- When it is dark outside, there is a danger of slipping and falling into gutters. Pass through wide, bright streets.
- Carry a flashlight, and walk while being careful of your footing.



Emergency supplies (supplies to prepare in case there is a disaster)

After a disaster occurs, it becomes difficult to buy things like food and daily necessities. Prepare the most vital necessities, and keep them in such a way that they can be picked up and carried away immediately when you need to evacuate.

There are 2 types of emergency supplies that you need to prepare.

① Items to be carried with you when you evacuate

: Portable Emergency Kit Supplies










② Items to be prepared for use at home when electricity, gas, and water services are stopped (Emergency Stockpile Supplies)

Let's check what you need for each type of supplies.



●Portable Emergency Kit Supplies

Prepare them inside a rucksack or similar item, so that you can pick it up and move immediately when you need to evacuate. After preparing the bag with all items inside, test out walking with it. Make sure that it doesn't become too heavy.

 <p>Water</p>	 <p>Food</p>	 <p>Towels/ Tissues</p>	 <p>Clothing/ Underwear</p>	 <p>First aid items</p>
 <p>Bankbooks and similar items</p>	 <p>Passport</p>	 <p>Residence Card</p>	 <p>Copy of your Health Insurance Card</p>	 <p>Money (coins such as ¥10 and ¥100 coins can be used for public telephones)</p>
 <p>Mobile phones and chargers</p>	 <p>Flashlights/ Spare batteries</p>	 <p>Portable radio</p>	 <p>Any needed medications</p>	 <p>Other things that you specifically need</p>

●Emergency Stockpile Supplies

At the minimum, prepare 3 days worth of supplies. If possible, as a general standard, try to maintain 1 weeks worth of supplies.

 <p>Water 3 liters needed for 1 days worth</p>	 <p>Food</p>	 <p>Plastic wrap/ Aluminum foil</p>	 <p>Disposable tableware</p>
 <p>Blankets</p>	 <p>Dry shampoo</p>	 <p>Tooth brushing sets/Mouthwash</p>	 <p>Portable stove/ fuel</p>

The emergency supplies needed are different from person to person. Prepare the things that you, your family, or other loved ones need.







Japanese used during a disaster

These terminology can be important for protecting yourself, so remember them.

Evacuation	避難	Hinan	Escaping to a safe place
Aftershock	余震	Yoshin	Further earthquakes that occur after a large earthquake (numerous aftershocks may occur)
Degree of shaking	震度	Shindo	The amount of shaking from an earthquake
Collapse	倒壊	Toukai	When houses or other buildings fall down and are destroyed
Fire	火事/火災	Kaji/Kasai	When a house or object, etc., burns
Power outage	停電	Teiden	When the electricity goes out
Water stoppage	断水	Dansui	When running water cannot be used
Stoppage/ Impassability	不通	Futsuu	When electricity, water, gas cannot be used /When roads become impassable
Water station	給水所	Kyuusuijo	A place where you can receive drinking water
Ambulance	救急車	Kyuukyusya	A vehicle used to transport people who are ill, injured, etc.
Food provision	炊き出し	Takidashi	When large amounts of food are given out for free at places like evacuation shelters
Charging	充電	Juuden	To charge mobile phones, radios, etc. with energy
Flood	洪水	Kouzui	A disaster that occurs when the amount of water in a river increases suddenly and dramatically due to heavy rains, melting snow, or other circumstances
Inundation	浸水	Shinsui	When a building, etc., becomes submerged in water
Flood	氾濫	Hanran	When the amount of water in a river increases suddenly and dramatically to the point that it overflows the banks of the river
River	河川	Kasen	A river

Marks for locations used for evacuation

Check the area surrounding your home, and memorize what marks are located where.

Evacuation Area		The first place to escape to when a disaster occurs. They are wide open places with a lot of space, such as a park or the grounds of a school.
Tsunami Evacuation Area		A place to escape from a tsunami. They are places that are higher in elevation than the surrounding area, such as a mountain, or a tall building like a hotel.
Evacuation Shelter		A gathering place for people whose homes have been destroyed, whose homes are currently dangerous, and so on. It is possible to receive necessities such as water and food here. They are usually places such as schools, public buildings, or community centers.
Elevation compared to sea level indicators		The elevation of the location compared to the elevation of the sea is displayed. When a tsunami is coming, immediately escape to a high elevation location.

How to use public telephones

●When calling an ambulance/firefighters, the police, etc.

Ambulance/firefighters: 119 Police: 110

For phones without an emergency notification button

- ① Pick up the receiver
- ② Dial 119 or 110

For phones with an emergency notification button

- ① Pick up the receiver
- ② Press the emergency notification button
- ③ Dial 119 or 110

●What to do when calling someone inside Japan during a disaster (During a large scale disaster, it is possible to use the phone free of charge)

For phones without an emergency notification button

- ① Pick up the receiver
- ② Dial the number of the person you want to call

For phones with an emergency notification button

- ① Pick up the receiver
- ② Insert coin (a ¥10 coin or a ¥100 coin)
- ③ Dial the number of the person you want to call



Emergency notification button

Checking on safety (whether people are safe or not)

When a disaster occurs, it becomes harder to connect with people via telephone. Decide ahead of time on several methods for you and your family, friends, and other loved ones to confirm each other's safety.

●Disaster Emergency Message Dial

Messages that you record using this service can be listened to by other people. It can be used from landline phones, mobile phones, and public phones.

How to use the service	When recording: Dial 171→Dial 1→Dial your own phone number→Dial 1 →Complete the recording
	When listening to a message: Dial 171→Dial 2→Dial the phone number of the person whose message you want to listen to→Dial 1→Listen to the message

●Disaster Message Board (web 171)

If you leave a message through text on the website, other people can check it. You can leave and check messages using devices such as a computer or smartphone.

How to use the service	Access https://www.web171.jp →Enter the telephone number of yourself or the person whose messages you want to check
------------------------	---

●Person Finder

Can be used to register personal safety information, check for such information, and so on. It is useable in several different languages.

<https://www.google.org/personfinder/japan>

Disaster prevention memo

Write some memos for use during a disaster situation.

Name	
Address	
Phone number	
Allergies	
Necessary medication	
Embassy/ Consulate phone number	
Closest evacuation area to your home	
Closest evacuation shelter to your home	
Family member names	
Family member phone numbers	
Meeting location for family members	



Disaster Prevention Handbook for Foreign Nationals

Published in March, 2024

Publisher: Public Interest Incorporated Foundation
Akita International Association

Akita International Association

Atorion Build. 1F., Nakadori 2-3-8, Akita City
TEL:018-893-5499 FAX:018-825-2566 E-mail: aia@aiahome.or.jp

We will release information during a disaster
so please follow us

