

# Disaster Preparedness

Disasters in Kumamoto come in all shapes and sizes. Here are some tips on preparation for disasters, so you can react calmly if they happen.

## When you move in:

All houses in Japan are at risk of disasters. It's the price we pay for such breathtaking scenery! But knowing which one's you are particularly at risk from is important:

- **Flooding** — do you live on the ground floor? Are you near a river? Is your building near a mountain slope and at risk from landslides?
- **Tsunami** — If you live on low-lying land or near the coast, where would you go for higher ground?
- **Earthquake** — do you have any furniture that could collapse or fall on you in an earthquake?
- **Typhoons** — do you keep any items outside? These should be brought in before a typhoon hits.
- **All disasters:**
  - Where is your nearest evacuation centre? It is often a school or a community space. What about your nearest hospital?
  - Does your town have a hazard map (*bousai mappa*)? You can use this to see if the area around your house is at risk
  - Start building up an evacuation bag
  - Get to know your area — especially if you have a car, it is easy to live in an area without knowing what hospitals, shops or stores are nearby.

## Keep Your House Stocked Up

Your city or town will respond quickly to a disaster. But be prepared for food shops and supply stores to be closed, and for your car to be out of action.

Make sure you have reserve food and water at home. Keep cans and instant food in the back of your cupboard, and if there is an advisory, pick up extra supplies in preparation.



## Emergency Bag

You might think that keeping an emergency bag at home sounds like a waste of time and money. But even in a minor natural disaster, it is important to have a stock of food, water and other essentials especially if you have to evacuate quickly. Buy these items when you see them at the supermarket, the drug store or the DIY store, and keep them stocked up. You can use them all up in your last week in Japan!

- First aid kit with minimum bandages and band-aids, disinfectant, and painkillers
- Food: instant noodles, snacks, instant rice, canned food, energy bars
- Water
- Torch
- COVID supplies: masks, sanitiser etc
- Passport, bank book, seal, some cash
- Toilet paper, wet wipes
- Medication, sanitary towels or other essential hygiene products
- Change of clothes
- Blanket — if you have to sleep in the evacuation centre, you want to make sure that you're warm
- A lighter, candles, a pocket knife, outdoor gloves, spare phone charger
- Trash bag / plastic bag

## Weather Advisories & Warnings

- Level 3** Prepare to evacuate. Elderly or disabled residents are advised to evacuate preemptively.
- Level 4** Evacuation advised. You should make sure that you are in the safest place possible depending on the disaster
- Level 5** Act now to protect your life

## Earthquakes

If you are inside, try to find shelter from falling objects inside. If you are outside, move away from glass and buildings.

Japan uses the Shindo Scale for quakes. A description of the scale can be found on the JMA website: <https://www.jma.go.jp/jma/en/Activities/inttable.html>

## Tsunami

Timing is very important if you receive a tsunami warning. Make for higher ground as quickly and safely as you can.

## Typhoons

Typhoon warnings are quite common between August and October. Keep track of weather predictions, and make sure your disaster radio is on if you have one. Stock up on food and water and prepare your emergency bag in case of flooding.

## Volcanic Eruption

Grab your safety gear and head to your nearest evacuation centre

### More Useful Links for Disaster Updates:

[https://www.data.jma.go.jp/multi/warn/kyusyu\\_kumamoto.html?warning=all&lang=en](https://www.data.jma.go.jp/multi/warn/kyusyu_kumamoto.html?warning=all&lang=en)

<https://emergency-weather.yahoo.co.jp/weather/en/warn/43/>



## In an Emergency

- **Only evacuate if it is safer to leave than to shelter in place.**
- If an evacuation advisory is issued in your area, evacuate to the nearest, safest place possible. If the evacuation centre is too far, consider sheltering with a neighbour. Do not try to make it to an evacuation centre if it is too dangerous.
- Have an evacuation bag to hand with some essentials (see a list on page 2).
- Contact your supervisor especially if you are unsure whether to leave your home. Once you are in a safe place, make sure to update them. You will also receive an automatic message from the Kumamoto PAs asking about your status.
- If you have a gas tap in your kitchen, turn it off after a quake or before you leave the house.
- If you are sheltering in place, you are recommended to fill your bathtub with water in case water mains are cut off.

Keep an eye on your city or town's website for updates, e.g. on water contamination, suspended trash collection, free emergency supplies, which stores are open etc. Ask your supervisor or area advisor for updates.



## Emergency Services

Of course, there are a lot more potential disasters than just the natural ones:

**Ambulance & Fire**                      **119**

**Police**                                      **110**

(Also call 110 and your supervisor in the event of a car accident)

Non-emergency police              099-254-91104

Police emergency                      0963-810-110

interpretation centre                ext. 4764

Aso region advice:

JETs in the Aso region should keep large bottles of water on hand in winter in case water pipes freeze when the temperature drops

## Kumamoto Disaster Advice

<http://kumamotojet.com/shin/index.php/living-in-kumamoto/safety/disaster-preparedness/>

## Covid-19 Advice

<http://www.kuma-koku.jp/page156.html>

**Don't worry about disasters, but keep your supplies stocked up and stay aware of weather warnings and updates so you aren't caught unawares!**