Disaster Prevention Handbook for Foreigners



Okinawa International Exchange & Human Resources Development Foundation (OIHF)

Introduction

Japan is one of the most prone to natural disasters in the world. Very strong rains, winds, earthquakes, etc. cause a lot of damage. This handbook contains important information on how to protect you and your family from disasters.

It is important to understand and take precautions for three main disasters: Wind/Flood damage, Earthquakes, and Tsunamis.

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1. Understanding Disaster

(1) What is Flood and Wind Damage?

Flood and wind damage is any disaster caused by strong winds and rain. The Following are examples.

◆Typhoon

- •Very strong tropical storm with wind and rain.
- •It occurs in Okinawa from summer to fall.
- •It can be very dangerous during a super typhoon, which results in collapsed houses and flooding.
- Be cautious when opening and closing doors.



◆High waves

- High wave height can cause damage.
- Typhoon and low pressure together cause high wave height.
- ●It is very dangerous to be close to ocean when a typhoon is approaching or passing through.

High tides

- ●When the air pressure decreases, the sea level rises and waves become very high.
- •Keep away from the ocean as it is very dangerous to be swept away





(2) What is an Earthquake?

An earthquake is when the ground shakes violently.

Large earthquakes are very dangerous because they can destroy buildings. Also, after the initial shaking, many "earthquakes (aftershock)" follow.

The Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred on March 11th, 2011 and the Kumamoto Earthquake that occurred on April 16th, 2016 caused a lot of damage, including a seismic intensity of 7.

Japan is a country where earthquakes are very common. It is said that there is a possibility that Okinawa could be hit by an earthquake as big as the Great East Japan Earthquake. Earthquakes can happen suddenly, so in order to be able to protect your life in an emergency, be prepared on a daily basis by fixing furniture, checking evacuation sites, and securing your emergency supplies.



Town hit by Tsunami

Photo courtesy: Sendai city, Miyagi prefecture



City turned into a Pile of Rubble

Photo courtesy: Sendai city, Miyagi prefecture

(3) What is a Tsunami?

A tsunami is a very high wave that comes after an earthquake. It is very dangerous because it reaches places where waves do not normally come.

Never go near the sea until the warning or advisory is lifted, as it will come not only once but many times.

Tsunamis are different from ordinary waves in the way they transmit power, and are faster and more powerful than you can imagine. In deep water, tsunamis hit as fast as a jet plane, and in coastal areas, they hit as fast as a short-distance runner.

Even a tsunami of about 50cm in height will not be enough to keep a person standing. Evacuate to higher ground immediately.



Black Tsunami Flows into the City Photo courtesy: Miyako city, Iwate prefecture

(4) What is a Drawback Wave?

A receding wave is a wave that recedes quickly and vigorously toward the sea after it has come in. Rip currents require the same attention as tsunamis. When a wave recedes toward the shore, it can engulf all buildings and other structures just like a tsunami. The undertow occurs after the tsunami, so it is necessary to keep evacuating to higher ground until safety is completely confirmed.



Desaki Pier, swallowed by Tsunami Wave one after another Photo courtesy: Miyako city, Iwate prefecture

(5) What is Evacuation Shelter or Evacuation Area?

Evacuation shelters are areas to evacuate in times of disaster. These are places where people can take refuge when their houses are damaged or in danger. Gymnasiums of elementary and junior high schools in the city are evacuation shelters/areas. Check the location of evacuation shelters/areas near your house.

Evacuation shelters can be identified as shown in Figure 1 or Figure 2. Confirm the location nearest to your home.

Anyone can use evacuation shelters/areas regardless of nationality or status of residence, even if they have overstayed or are delinquent in paying taxes.

The main difference between an "evacuation shelter" and an "evacuation area" is that an "evacuation area" is a temporary space, so after a certain period of time, it will be closed. Evacuees must be careful because they will be forced to move.

(6) What is a Tsunami Evacuation Building?

A tsunami evacuation building is a building where local residents can temporarily take refuge in the event of a tsunami. Many of these buildings are located in areas where there are few elevated areas where people can quickly evacuate. Public facilities and condominiums along the coast are designated as tsunami evacuation buildings. When a tsunami warning is issued, people living near the ocean or river should immediately flee to the roof of a tsunami evacuation building. Tsunami evacuation buildings are marked as shown in Figure 3.



Naha city Tsunami Evacuation Building (2-22-1 Matsuyama Naha city)



Figure 1 Evacuation Shelter



Figure 2 Evacuation Area



Figure 3 Tsunami Evacuation
Building

◆Precautions for Evacuations

- ●When a warning or special alert is issued, an evacuation shelter will be set up. When an evacuation shelter is set up, it will be announced via the disaster prevention email of each municipality and the OIHF Facebook page.
- Evacuation shelters have only the bare minimum of facilities. It will take a few days to prepare food, so be prepared to live on your own during this time.
- •Walk to the evacuation shelter. Do not use a car.
- ●In an evacuation shelter, you need to live with many other people. It becomes difficult to secure privacy and there are many inconveniences. It is very hard for everyone, so be considerate of each other, follow the rules of the shelter, and cooperate with everyone.
- Write down what you need at the reception desk of the shelter. This will be helpful in letting your family and acquaintances know that you are alive and where you are, and in getting relief supplies.
- ●In case of disaster, the public utilities, such as electricity, water, gas etc., may be stopped.

◆Rules for Evacuation Shelter

- •Keep the rules on the amount and frequency of food.
- •Keep restroom clean and follow the rules on trash.
- Smoke at designated area only.
- Follow etiquette to avoid disturbing others, such as not shouting.
- ■Cooperate with others as you will be living with a lot of people for a while.
- •Keep the line in order.



Evacuation Shelter (Mashiki town, Kumamoto prefecture)

2. Preparing for Disaster

It is important to be prepared on a daily basis so that you can protect yourself and take immediate evacuation action in the event of a disaster. Being connected with people around you, such as your office, school, neighbors, and community association, is a great way to be prepared.

(1) Preparing for Flood and Wind Damage

When the weather turns bad, pay attention to the weather information on TV and radio and gather accurate information. If you live near the ocean, rivers, or mountains, storm surges, floods, or landslides may occur near your home. Even if you do not receive an evacuation call or an email from the municipality, if you feel that you are in danger, evacuate immediately.

◆Things to Keep in Mind during Flood and Wind Damage

- •Pay attention to area emails and information provided by TV, radio, and the municipally.
- Stay indoor during heavy rain and wind unless you are required to evacuate
- ●There is a danger that strong winds may break the window glass. If it is windy, close windows and curtains and stay away from windows.
- Be cautious when opening and closing door.
- ●Evacuate to a higher place, such as the second floor, before the water enters the house.
- The depth of water people can walk in is less than 70 cm for adult males and less than 50 cm for adult females. When the water is flowing, make sure the water is shallow before walking.
- •If you are in a car, slow down and head for higher ground, avoiding underpasses and other places where water can accumulate.





(2) Preparing for Earthquakes

There are different things to pay attention to depending on the situation when an earthquake occurs. No matter where the earthquake occurs, be prepared to evacuate safely. Also, be aware of the "Earthquake Early Warning System," which notifies you via TV, radio, or mobile devices a few seconds to a few dozen seconds before an earthquake occurs, so that you can protect yourself in the event of an earthquake.

Summary of the JMA Seismic Intesity Scale











- Most people are srartled.
- Hanging objects suas as lamps swing siginificantly.



6 Lower

- It is difficult to remain standing
- Wall tiles and windows may sustain damage and fall.



5 Lower

- Many people are frightened and feel the need to hold onto something stable.
- Dishes in cupboards and items on bookshelves may fall.



6 Upper

- It is impossible to move without crawling. People may be thrown through the
- Most of unsecured funitire moves, and is more likely to topple over.



5 Upper

- Many people find it difficult to walk without holding onto something stable.
- Unsecured funiture may topple over.



7

- In reinforced concrete buildings with low seismic resistance, more objects will fall over.
- The Kumamoto earthquake and the Great East Japan Earthquake are examples.

Source: Japan Meteorological Agency website (https://www.jma.go.jp/jma/kishou/books/kaikyuhyo/kaikyuhyo_a2.png)

◆Emergency Earthquake Announcement

Immediately after the occurrence of an earthquake, the time of arrival of strong tremors and the intensity of the tremors in each area are predicted, and the information is provided in Japanese via TV and mobile devices as quickly as possible.

◆J Alert

Information about natural disasters such as large-scale earthquakes and ballistic missile attacks, for which there is no time to spare, is provided instantly in Japanese via mobile devices. When a J alert is issued, act calmly.

When You are Indoor

Protecting yourself

Stay under the table to protect yourself from falling furniture or objects.

Be cautious on fire

Do not approach the source of the fire. Do not rush to put out the fire, as the gas will automatically shut off when it detects an earthquake equivalent to a seismic intensity of 5. Do not rush to put out the fire. Turn off the main gas valve after the earthquake has stopped.

Securing the exit

Be sure to open doors and windows to create an exit for escape. If the door or window is deformed by the earthquake, it may not open.

Do not rush

In some cases, it may be safer to stay indoors, so stay indoors depending on the situation. However, if a tsunami is imminent, run away immediately. When escaping outside, check outside carefully. Be sure to wear shoes when escaping, as there is debris and glass fragments outside.







Do not use elevator

If an earthquake occurs while you are in an elevator, press all the buttons and get off at the nearest floor. If the elevator comes to an emergency stop, get off immediately. If the doors do not open, press the emergency call button and wait for help.



When You are Outdoor

Outside of the building

There is a danger of windows and signs falling from buildings. Protect your head with your hands and belongings. Also, walls and vending machines may fall down, so run to a large area.



While driving

Do not panic and stop suddenly. Slow down gradually, stop on the left side of the road, and turn off the engine. When you leave the car, leave the key in the ignition and take your valuables with you.



While in public transportation

Hold on tightly to the leashes and handrails. Do not go out of the car without permission, and follow the instructions of the attendant.



When you are in underground

Follow the directions of the guide lights and evacuation guides to escape along the walls.



•When there are lots of people in the facility

Do not rush to the exit. Follow the instructions.



(3) Preparing for Tsunamis

Okinawa is made up of 160 islands of various sizes, all surrounded by the sea. In the coastal areas, houses, hotels, and commercial facilities are built at low elevations, so we must always be prepared for tsunami. In the 1771 Meiwa Tsunami, Ishigaki Island was hit by a 30-meter-high tsunami, and in 1960, the tsunami from the Chilean earthquake across the Pacific Ocean was recorded to have reached Okinawa.

When a tsunami warning is issued, the first thing to do is to quickly evacuate to a safe and high place. If it is too late to escape, or if it is difficult to evacuate far, evacuate to a higher place such as a tsunami evacuation building. Tsunami evacuation buildings are marked with signs like the one shown in the figure.

Also, check the height of the places where you live, work, and go to school on a regular basis. You can check the height by looking for signs like the ones shown in the figure on utility poles and at the entrances to buildings.









Check it out!

Check the tsunami forecast for your home, office, and other places you frequent.

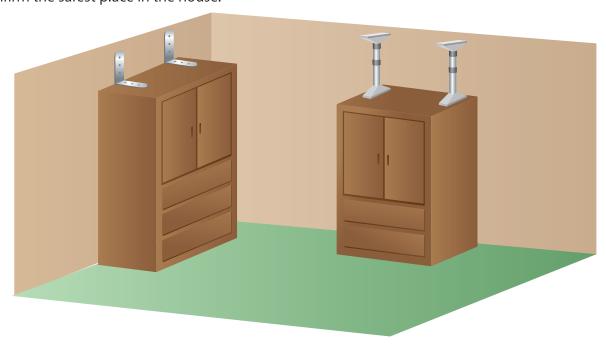
My house's sea level	_ meter. (When tsunami, hit evacuate to)	
My office's sea level	meter. (When tsunami hit, evacuate to)	
's sea level _	meter. (When tsunami hit, evacuate to	_)
's sea level	meter. (When tsunami hit, evacuate to	_)

(4) Daily Preparation

You never know when a disaster will strike. Prepare an emergency kit, evacuation site, evacuation route, and how to contact your family after evacuation in advance. Also, when an earthquake strikes, make sure to know which areas of your house and evacuation routes are dangerous so that you can be prepared.

◆Safety Measures for the House

- •Secure tall furniture (chests of drawers, refrigerators, bookshelves, etc.) with anti-tip brackets.
- Place the TV as low as possible.
- Do not place anything on the furniture.
- Do not place furniture or other objects that can easily fall over at the entrance or along the path to the doorway.
- ●Don't place large, easy-to-fall furniture around the bed.
- Apply shatterproof film to the glass.
- Confirm the safest place in the house.



◆Check evacuation shelters/areas beforehand!

Check the evacuation shelters/areas near your house and be prepared to evacuate at any time. Check your local government's website for the location of evacuation shelters/areas. It is also a good idea to discuss the evacuation shelters/areas with your family beforehand.

◆Preparing for infectious diseases in evacuation shelters/areas

In an evacuation shelters/areas where many people gather, it is necessary to be prepared for infectious diseases such as norovirus and COVID-19 that can be transmitted from person to person.

Before going to an evacuation shelters/areas

□Check the physical condition of yourself and your family. The most important thing is to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. If you are experiencing nausea, fever, fatigue, or any other physical changes, it is important to temporarily consider dispersing your evacuation to a hotel, evacuating from home, or staying in a car.



What to bring to the evacuation shelters/areas.

- ☐ Facial mask
- □ Disinfectant or disinfectant spray
- □Thermometer

If you do not have a mask, you can use a large towel or hand towel to cover your nose and mouth instead. Wet wipes are also good to have on hand in case you don't have disinfectant.





Living in an evacuation shelters/areas

- □Ventilate and wash hands thoroughly.
- ☐ Maintain a social distance (about 2 meters from other people)
- □ Avoid talking in close quarters and refrain from talking during meals.

Make sure to wash your hands and disinfect your hands before and after eating and after using the restroom. If it is difficult to maintain a social distance, sitting with your back to the room or creating a partition with cardboard can be effective.

◆Emergency Bag

After a disaster strikes, you need to survive on your own until help arrives. For this reason, it is important for families to check and prepare the minimum necessary provisions to take with them in case of evacuation. Keep your emergency supplies in a place where they can be easily accessed. Also, check regularly for expired or missing items, and replace old items with new ones.

Basic Items (Food Items) □ Emergency food (canned food, dried bread, alphanumeric rice, etc.) □ Drinking water (500ml x 6 bottles per day) **(First Aid Items)** ☐ First aid bag (Hair plucking, antiseptic solution, absorbent cotton, gauze, bandage, bandage, triangular bandage, mask, etc.) ☐ Medicine **[Daily Supplies]** □Flashlight □ Candles and lighters □ Portable radio □ Scissors □Gloves □ Ropes □ Duct tape □Towe ☐Plastic bag ☐Wet tissue ☐Blue sheet □Toilet paper □Blanket ☐ Disposable toilet □ Infant product (milk etc.) □Others (Contact lenses, denture, disposable heating pad)

[Others]

- ☐ Money (including coins)☐ Bank book and cash card☐ Passport☐ Residence card
- ☐Writing pen and marker pen
- □Other necessary items





● Stockpile: Try to keep at least a 7-day supply (10-day supply is even better)

ems

\square Drinking water	\square Water tank	□Soup	□Salt	
☐Retort foods, canned foods (instant noodles, etc.)				
□Alpha rice, rice cake, dried bread, bread can				
□Confectionery (cool	kies, candies, chocola	tes, etc.)		

[Daily Supplies]

□Blanket	\square Bath towel, towel
□ Plastic wrap, aluminum foil	□Paper plate, paper cup
□Newspapers	□Disposable heating pac
□Safety pin	□Batteries
\square Portable gas stove, gas cylinder, fuel	□Cell phone charger
□Chopsticks, spoon, forks	□Soap, dry shampoo
□Pot, kettle	\square Rain gear
□Tooth brush, tooth paste	☐Sanitary supplies
☐Other necessity items	



◆Online Evacuee Registration Form

OIHF has developed an "Online Evacuee Registration Form" and will use it to support foreigners in need when the "Multilingual Support Center" is opened during a large-scale disaster. The form can be entered in multiple languages (English, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Korean, Spanish, Nepali, and Vietnamese) in order to help foreign residents rebuild their lives and foreign tourists return home by consolidating information on foreign disaster victims. OIHF staff and "Supporters for Foreigners in Times of Disaster," whom we have trained, will visit evacuation shelters/areas to grasp the situation by counseling foreign residents in need and help them to move on to the next action.

Online Evacuee Registrtion Form





Make sure you know what the form looks like beforehand.





Supporters for Foreigners in Times of Disaster

"The information on the form shows at a glance not only the language and nationality of the person requiring assistance, but also whether or not they are injured."

◆List of Multilingual Expressions Used in the Case of a Disaster

The Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) has compiled a list of "Multilingual Disaster Display Sheets" and "Pictograms for Disaster Use" that can be used in times of disaster in 15 languages, including Japanese. It is a collection of expressions that can be used in the management of evacuation shelters/areas, etc., so it is recommended to prepare them for use in normal times.

HP: dis.clair.or.jp



3. Taking Action

(1) Participation in Local Disaster Prevention Activities

When a major disaster occurs, various kind of damage may occur in a wide range. To reduce the damage, it is necessary for local people to assist in extinguishing small fire, rescue, aid and guide for evacuation to assist each other.

Actively participate in local activities, such as disaster drills held by voluntary disaster prevention organizations where you live. Communicate with your neighbors regularly so that you can support each other in your daily life and in the event of a disaster.

As a first step, participate in local activities and discuss with neighbor about the disaster prevention.



"Easy-Japanese" Cultivating Seminar



Emergency Rescue Drill

● Training of "Supporters for Foreigners in Times of Disaster"

The OIHF is training "Supporters for Foreigners in Times of Disaster" who provide multilingual support to foreign victims in times of disaster. After the occurrence of a disaster, on the premise that safety has been confirmed, the supporters will collect information on foreigners at evacuation shelters/areas and support them by translating the obtained information into multiple languages.

● Evacuation Shelter Management Drill/ Experience Evacuation Shelter Event

When the large disaster occurs, municipal staff suffer from ability to assist, and communications will be disrupted that response will be delayed. In such case, we will need to assist each others within evacuation shelter. "Evacuation Shelter Management Drill" is to assist and train each others regardless of sex, age, nationality, religion to manage evacuation shelter. In addition, an "Evacuation Shelter Experience Event" will be held at the same time to allow participants to experience various events related to evacuation shelters and become familiar with them.



Desk Training for Evacuation Shelter Management



Evacuation Shelter Management Drill

When a natural disaster occurs and it is dangerous to evacuate, the municipality, fire department, or police will issue an evacuation advisory or order (emergency). Listen to the correct information on TV or radio and evacuate. Even if there is no evacuation advisory or instruction, if you feel that your house is about to be destroyed by an earthquake, or that a fire is nearby, etc., evacuate immediately.

Advisory and Warning

When a disaster is likely to occur, the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) will issue the following warnings and advisories, depending on the level of danger. The situation can easily change, so always pay attention to the latest information.

Examples of warnings and advisories: heavy rain, floods, windstorms, tsunamis, waves, storm surges, etc. Examples of danger levels

e.g. Heavy Rain Advisory < Heavy Rain Warning < Heavy Rain Special Warning



Special Warnings and Tsunami Warnings

• It is issued when there is a threat of unprecedented heavy rain, storm surge, wind storm or tsunami.

Warning

• It is issued when there is a threat of a serious disaster.

Advisory

• It is issued when there is a possibility of disaster.

◆Evacuation Information

If there is a threat of a disaster and evacuation is necessary, the following evacuation information will be issued according to the risk of disaster. Evacuation information will be provided to you through disaster prevention speakers, mobile device, the Internet, TV, and radio. Take appropriate action according to the information. Depending on where you live, it may be difficult or impossible to hear disaster prevention speakers, so be sure to check other media frequently for disaster information.



Emergency safety: life threatening, immediate safety

- · A disaster has already occurred or is imminent.
- Take action to save lives!

Evacuation order: Evacuate all people from dangerous areas

- The risk of damage from a disaster is very high.
- Evacuate to a safe place after thoroughly checking the surrounding situation.

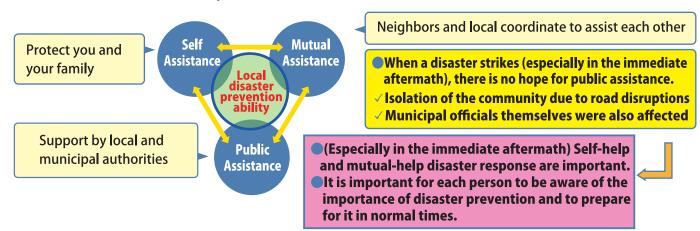
Evacuation of the elderly, etc.: Evacuate the elderly, etc. from dangerous places.

- Prepare an emergency kit.
- Start evacuating people who need time to evacuate, such as the elderly, infants, foreigners, and people with physical disabilities.

Dangerous degree

◆Self Assistance, Mutual Assistance, and Public Assistance

Local Disaster Prevention Ability=Self × Mutual × Public Assistance



◆Self, Mutual and Public Assistance with Multi Languages Information

Multilingual Information on Disaster Mitigation

Disaster prevention weather information on the Japan Meteorological Agency website can be checked in multiple languages.



Okinawa Disaster Prevention Information Portal "Hai Sai Disaster Preparedness" (www.bousai.okinawa.jp)

This is a website with a lot of emergency information issued by Okinawa Prefecture, as well as various information needed when a disaster occurs. The site is available in English, Chinese, Korean, and Japanese. You can also register your cell phone email address to receive various disaster prevention information by email.



●Information by OIHF's HP/FB

At the time of a disaster, information sent to the Multilingual Support Center, which will be set up by the OIHF, will be posted on the OIHF Homepage/Facebook in multi-languages: Japanese, English, Chinese (simplified and traditional), Korean, Spanish, Nepali, Vietnamese, and easy Japanese.



(HP: https://kokusai.oihf.or.jp) (FB: https://www.facebook.com/oihf60)

Multilingual Living Information Application by Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR)

The "Multilingual Living Information Application" issued by the Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR) provides multilingual information on what you need to know in times of disaster and in your daily life, and you can view it from your smartphone.

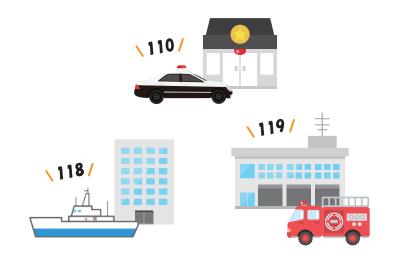


The Japan Tourism Agency's "Safety tips" push-type information transmission application for foreign tourists provides accurate information on natural disasters (earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, eruptions, etc.) in multiple languages.



(3) Emergency Contact

Police Station 110 (Japanese only)
Fire Station 119 (Japanese only)
Japan Coast Guard 118 (Japanese only)



(4) Safety Confirmation Method

Message System on Disaster "171"

In the event of a disaster, safety information (messages) can be recorded (registered) as voice messages to landline, cell phone, and other phone numbers, and the voice messages can be played back (confirmed) from anywhere in Japan.

[How to use]

- 1. Dial 1-7-1
- 2. Follow the guidance, dial 1 for recording and 2 for playback (You can also record and play with a pin number)
- 3. Follow the guidance, dial the number of person you want to call (For number starts such as 03, dial from the area code)
- 4. You can record and play back messages



Disaster Message Board

With the Internet connection function of smartphones, etc., people in the disaster area can register their messages by text and check them from all over the country based on the number of their smartphones, etc. (Check the website of each smartphone company for details on using this service. For more information, refer to the website of each smartphone company.)

[How to use]

- 1. Access the Disaster Message Board from your smartphone or other device.

 (In the event of a disaster, information on the Disaster Message Board will be displayed on the top screen of each company's official website. Access it from the menu list when you use it.
- 2. Select "Register" in the "Disaster Message Board" section.

 (Registration can only be accessed from smartphones and other devices in the affected area.
- 3. Choose from the following options: "I'm fine. (You can select multiple states or use only the comment. (You can select more than one status, or use only one comment.
- 4. Finally, press "Register" to complete the registration to the message board.

【Confirmation method】

Access the Disaster Message Board.
 (You can also check your messages from a PC, etc.)

• NTT Docomo http://dengon.docomo.ne.jp/top.cgi

KDDI (au) http://dengon.ezweb.ne.jp/
 Softbank http://dengon.softbank.ne.jp/
 Y!mobile http://dengon.ymobile.jp/info/

2. Select "Confirm" in the "Disaster Message Board" section. (Confirmation can be accessed from anywhere in the country.)

3. Enter the smartphone number of the person you want to confirm the safety of and press "Search".

4. The message list will be displayed. Select the message you want to check the details of.

NTT Docomo



KDDI (au)



Softbank



Y!mobile

Disaster Message Board 171 Web

You can register and confirm your safety information (messages) by entering your landline or cell phone number from your PC or smartphone.



[How to use]

- 1. Access to: https://www.web171.jp/
- 2. Enter the landline or mobile phone number of the person you wish to contact.
- 3. You can register and check your messages. (You can also limit the number of people who can view it by setting it in advance. Each message is limited to 100 double-byte characters (text).)

●Safety information Search "J-anpi"

By entering your name or phone number in the URL: http://anpi .jp/top, you can search for safety information provided by disaster message boards of various companies, media organizations, companies and organizations. This service is only available in English and Japanese.



(5) Apps that are Useful as Disaster

Disaster information by NHK



NHK world TV is compatible with smartphones and tablets running iOS or Android operating systems, so you can get live broadcasts in multilingual information when you are on the move or in places where there is no TV or radio.

Yurekuru, Yahoo disaster report, NHK news disaster



Quickly obtain safety and security in the event of an earthquake



News bulletins on earthquakes, rain cloud radar, warnings, evacuation advisories, etc.



You can get the latest news and disaster information.



Disaster Prevention Handbook for Foreigners

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Okinawa International Exchange & Human Resources

Development Foundation (OIHF)

4-2-16 Isa, Ginowan-city, Okinawa, 901-2221, JAPAN

Phone: 098-942-9215 (DIAL-IN)

E-mail: kokusai@oihf.or.jp

HP: https://kokusai.oihf.or.jp/

Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/oihf60

Courtesy of Useful Information

Japan Metrological Agency, Okinawa

