

7.3 magnitude earthquake hits Tonga, triggering temporary tsunami advisory

A powerful underwater earthquake struck Friday off Tonga in the southern Pacific, prompting authorities to issue a tsunami advisory that was later lifted. The U.S. Geological Survey said the magnitude 7.3 quake was centered 132 miles east-southeast of Neiafu, Tonga, at a depth of 15 miles.

It predicted strong shaking but said the probability of serious damage or casualties was small.

The U.S. Tsunami Warning System initially issued a tsunami advisory, which is one step below a tsunami warning.

“There is no longer a tsunami threat from this earthquake,” said the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center at about 1:30 am.

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