

Fukushima Today



▶ Related video
https://youtu.be/Hi_afnXdNHs

Steady Progress on Decommissioning of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station

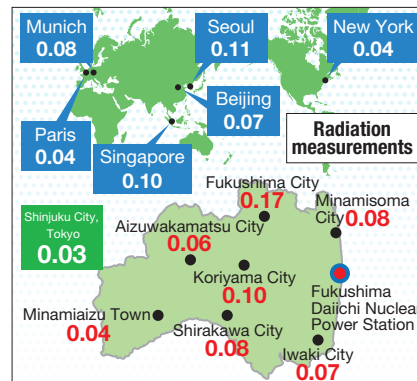
Overwhelmed by the tsunami caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 11, 2011, the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station lost its ability to cool the reactors, and overheating of the fuel caused a hydrogen explosion. Now the reactors are under continuous water-injection cooling, and stable conditions are being maintained.

The cooling water is purified and recycled, and multilevel protective measures are being taken to prevent water contamination and outflows of contaminated water, such as by pumping up groundwater, building an impermeable wall, and treating contaminated water with radioactive material removal equipment. Information about the status of these measures is constantly disclosed in Japan and internationally; for example, reports are regularly submitted to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Currently, about 6,000 workers are proceeding safely and steadily with decommissioning work at the site of the power station. Initially they needed to wear protective clothing, but their workplace environment has improved, and now they can wear ordinary uniforms in about 90% of their work area.



Thanks to decontamination efforts at the site of the power station, full-body suits and face masks are no longer mandatory in 90% of the site.
 Photo: Tokyo Electric Power Company Holdings, Inc.



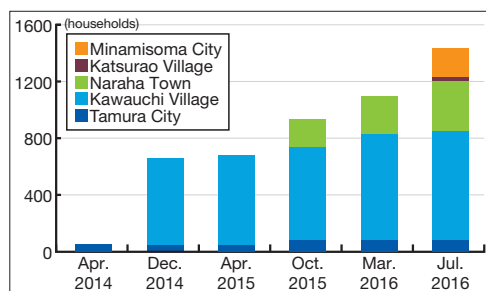
Unit: microsieverts/hour (µSv/h)

Values for locations outside of Japan are as measured from July 13–15, 2016. Values for locations in Japan are as measured on December 1, 2016.

Source: Fukushima Prefecture, "Fukushima fukko no ayumi" (English version: "Steps for Revitalization in Fukushima"), 18th ed., based on Reconstruction Agency (Japan), "Basic Information on Radiation Risk," and materials from the Japan National Tourism Organization (JNTO), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and France's Institut de radioprotection et de sûreté nucléaire (IRSN).

Stepping Up Measures to Allow Residents to Return

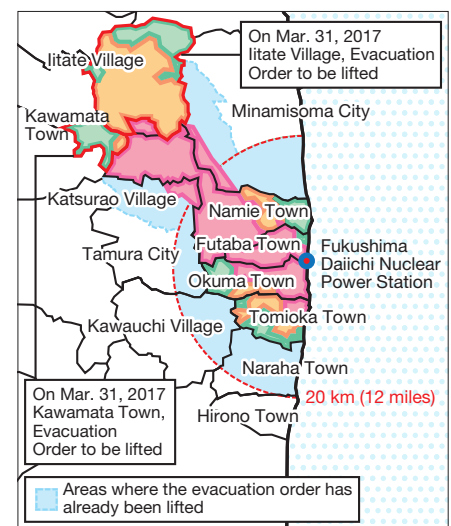
After the earthquake, the Japanese government issued evacuation orders for severely affected areas of Fukushima Prefecture for the sake of residents' safety. Since then work has been progressing to restore electricity, gas, water, and other services and to decontaminate the areas. Now the evacuation orders are being lifted in one area after another as the necessary conditions are met, and people are moving back to their hometowns.



Number of households returning to hometowns after evacuation orders lifted

Source: Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, compiled from data collected by local governments.

Areas subject to evacuation orders



The Japanese government is aiming to lift evacuation orders in some areas in Tomioka and Namie Town in spring 2017.
 Source: Fukushima Prefecture, "Fukushima fukko no ayumi" (English version: "Steps for Revitalization in Fukushima"), 18th ed.

Rigorous Efforts to Ensure Food Safety

Fukushima Prefecture is one of Japan's leading farming regions and produces delicious food, including the country's second-largest crop of peaches and fourth-largest rice harvest. All of Fukushima's agricultural produce is subject to thorough monitoring for radioactive substances and is only shipped after clearing strict standards. In other words, it is completely safe to eat. The *Codex Alimentarius* Commission of the WHO and the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) have set a guideline level of 1,000 becquerels per kilogram (Bq/kg) for food safety, but Fukushima's standards are much stricter—100 Bq/kg for general foods and 10 Bq/kg for drinking water—and have won high appraisals from the WHO and FAO.

Food group	Limit (Bq/kg)	
	Japan	Codex*
General foods	100	1000
Infant foods	100	1000
Milk	50	1000
Drinking water	10	1000

The guidelines for the levels of radioactive substances in food set by Japan's Food Sanitation Act are extremely strict even by international standards.

* International Food Standards

Rapid Restoration of Transportation Infrastructure

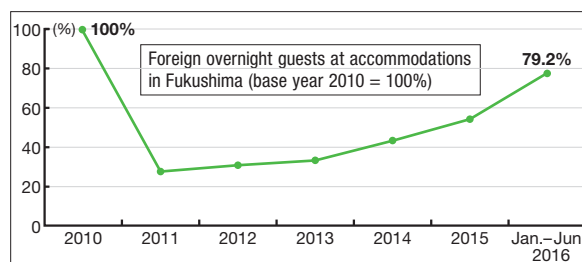
Transportation infrastructure in the disaster-affected areas is being restored at a rapid pace. North-south arteries such as National Route No. 6 and the Joban Expressway have completely reopened, and train services have been restored on most of the JR Joban Line, with restoration of the entire line to be completed no later than March 2020. The flow of people has been restored, and many foreign tourists are visiting Fukushima, which is endowed with many sightseeing attractions.



On December 10, 2016, Prime Minister Abe attended a ceremony to celebrate the reopening of a section of the JR Joban Line.

Source: Japan Tourism Agency, "Statistical Survey on Overnight Travel."

Note: Figures are based on the number of guests staying at accommodations with 10 employees or more.



Innovating and Creating New Industries for the Future

In addition to conducting recovery efforts, the Japanese government is implementing the Innovation Coast Scheme, which aims to develop Fukushima as a base for creating new industries. This scheme has already started to produce results, as seen in the opening in rapid succession of hubs for development of cutting-edge technologies. These include the Fukushima Hama-Dori Robot Test Zone and Remote Technology Development Center to promote development of drones and other robotic devices. In January this year, a demonstration test was conducted in a section of the robot test zone along the seashore, and it achieved the world's first successful long-distance air freight shipment by a fully autonomous drone. Meanwhile, a floating wind turbine for generating electricity, the largest of its kind in the world, is being installed off the coast.

Rebounding from the disaster, the people of Fukushima are now striding vigorously toward the future.



A 7-megawatt floating wind turbine has been constructed off the coast of Fukushima under a project commissioned by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry. The blades reach a height of 200 meters (about 660 feet) above the ocean. Photo: Fukushima Offshore Wind Consortium.