



Ventura County Public Health

A Division of the Ventura County Health Care Agency

2240 E. Gonzales Road • Oxnard, California 93036

<http://www.vchca.org/ph>

Barry R. Fisher, MPPA
Director

Robert M. Levin, M.D.
Health Officer/Medical Director

For more information please contact:
HCA Public Information Officer
Contact: Sheila Murphy
(805) 677-5274
sheila.murphy@ventura.org

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Japan's Nuclear Reactor Problem Unlikely to Pose Risk in Ventura County

[Ventura] -- Many people on the West Coast of the United States are concerned about the risk that faces us from the radiation being released from damaged Japanese nuclear reactors. The United States is familiar with monitoring and responding to distant source releases of radioactive materials. Such releases occurred frequently throughout the 20th century beginning in the 1950s with the testing of nuclear weapons by countries throughout the world.

The Ventura County Department of Public Health exists to promote the safety of all of our county's residents. This is our highest priority. We have well-established mechanisms in place to stay informed by the state and federal agencies responsible for monitoring radiation levels across the West Coast.

We want to emphasize that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have all stated that **there is no risk expected to California or its residents as a result of the situation in Japan.**

We will continue to monitor the situation in Japan and will take all available steps necessary to protect our county's residents. If we become aware of a radiation threat to our county's residents we will recommend protective actions.

We urge our county's residents **not** to take potassium iodide as a precautionary measure. It is not necessary given the current circumstances in Japan. It can be harmful to people with allergies to iodine or shellfish and to people who have thyroid problems. Taken inappropriately, it can have serious side effects including abnormal heart rhythms, nausea, vomiting, electrolyte abnormalities and bleeding.

Ventura County residents with questions about radiation exposure can contact the California Department of Public Health's Emergency Operations information line at 916 341-3947.

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