



NEWS

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Air District continues to monitor radiation levels *No abnormal readings detected from Japan*

SAN FRANCISCO - The Bay Area Air Quality Management District operates a radiation monitor in San Francisco as part of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's national RadNet radiation monitoring network.

The RadNet monitor is extremely sensitive and can identify very small changes in ambient air levels of radiation.

"It would take a much larger blast than what has occurred for radiation from the power plant to get into the jet stream," said Eric Stevenson, Air District director of technical services. "Even if that were to happen, we still expect radiation moving west would dissipate before reaching California shores. It is very unlikely that the radiation from the tragedy in Japan will impact the United States."

To date, all measurements in the Bay Area are within normal background levels. The U.S. EPA and the Federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission have indicated that there are no harmful levels of radiation expected to reach the United States.

The monitor has been in operation for four years and takes continuous measurements. This data is sent real-time to the U.S. EPA's National Air and Radiation Environmental Laboratory in Montgomery, Alabama. This monitor also collects data on filters, which the Air District sends to the Alabama laboratory for additional analysis.

The U.S. EPA's RadNet network is a national network of monitoring stations that regularly collect air, precipitation, drinking water and milk samples for analysis of radioactivity. The RadNet network has been used to track environmental releases of radioactivity from nuclear weapons tests and nuclear accidents.

The California Department of Public Health is urging the public not to take potassium iodide tablets. For more information please see the statement from CDPH <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/Pages/CDPHCalEMAstatementMarch152011.aspx>

The Air District will continue to post information about the situation in Japan on our www.baaqmd.gov and www.sparetheair.org websites as it becomes available.

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (www.baaqmd.gov) is the regional agency responsible for protecting air quality in the nine-county Bay Area.

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