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Harmless amounts of Japanese radiation detected in Alaska

Levels are thousands of times below any health concerns

(Anchorage, AK) — On March 28, 2011, the state of Alaska received the first report from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency that has identified trace amounts of radioactive isotopes in Alaska that likely came from the failing nuclear power plant in Japan.

While daily readings taken at the six Alaska-based monitoring stations immediately detect small changes in gross *beta* or *gamma* radiation, filters and canisters from the monitoring stations are submitted for laboratory analysis on a bi-weekly basis to determine the specific isotopes.

Isotopes identified in samples taken from monitors in Dutch Harbor, Juneau, and Nome on March 19 – 23, are consistent with those identified in California, Guam, Alabama, Hawaii, Nevada, Idaho, Washington state and other places throughout the Lower 48. According to the EPA, these types of findings are to be expected in the coming days and are still hundreds of thousands of times below levels of public health concerns.

“These data demonstrate how sensitive the EPA monitors are at detecting miniscule amounts of radioactive isotopes,” said Dr. Bernd Jilly, director of the state labs. “We can’t stress strongly enough that these levels are well below any need for public concern.”

Daily readings taken at the six Alaska-based monitoring stations would show spikes in *beta* or *gamma* radiation should higher levels reach Alaska. At that point, samples could be immediately dispatched for analysis and any necessary response plan put into action.

Detailed information on this latest round of filter results can be found at:

<http://epa.gov/japan2011/docs/rert/radnet-filter-data-public-release-3-28-11.pdf>

Daily readings from Alaska's monitors can be found at:
<http://www.epa.gov/radiation/rert/radnet-data-map.html>

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