

New Radiation Releases: Governments Underreported Severity of Fukushima

Massive New Radiation Releases Possible from Fukushima ... Especially If Melted Core Materials Hit Water

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Region: [Asia](#)

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Governments Underreported Severity of Fukushima

As I've noted for [6 months](#), the Japanese and U.S. governments have continually underreported the severity of the nuclear crisis at Fukushima.

The Wall Street Journal [points out](#):

The Japanese government initially underestimated radiation releases from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, in part because of untimely rain, and so exposed people unnecessarily, a report released this week by a government research institute says.

PhysOrg [writes](#):

The amount of radiation released during the Fukushima nuclear disaster was so great that the level of atmospheric radioactive aerosols in Washington state was 10,000 to 100,000 times greater than normal levels in the week following the March 11 earthquake and tsunami that triggered the disaster.

[A] study [by University of Texas engineering professor Steven Biegalski and researchers at the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory] reports that more radioxenon was released from the Fukushima facilities than in the 1979 meltdown at the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station in Pennsylvania and in the 1986 Chernobyl nuclear disaster in the Ukraine.

Biegalski said the reason for the large release in Fukushima, when compared to the others, is that there were three nuclear reactors at the Japan facilities rather than just one.

Nuclear expert Arnie Gundersen [notes](#):

New TEPCO data measured on August 19 & 20 shows severe damage to the spent fuel in Fukushima Daiichi Units 1, 2, and 3.... This TEPCO data clearly contradicts and refutes the July assertion by the NRC the Fukushima Daiichi spent fuel pools were not damaged in this tragic accident.

There are also several [unconfirmed reports](#) that the Japanese government is trying to keep people from buying geiger counters to measure radiation.

New, Large Radiation Releases Are Possible

Mainichi Dailly News [notes](#):

As a radiation meteorology and nuclear safety expert at Kyoto University's Research Reactor Institute, Hiroaki Koide [says]:

The nuclear disaster is ongoing.

At present, I believe that there is a possibility that massive amounts of radioactive materials will be released into the environment again.

At the No. 1 reactor, there's a chance that melted fuel has burned through the bottom of the pressure vessel, the containment vessel and the floor of the reactor building, and has sunk into the ground. From there, radioactive materials may be seeping into the ocean and groundwater.

The government and plant operator TEPCO are trumpeting the operation of the circulation cooling system, as if it marks a successful resolution to the disaster. However, radiation continues to leak from the reactors. The longer the circulation cooling system keeps running, the more radioactive waste it will accumulate. It isn't really leading us in the direction we need to go.

It's doubtful that there's even a need to keep pouring water into the No.1 reactor, where nuclear fuel is suspected to have burned through the pressure vessel. Meanwhile, it is necessary to keep cooling the No. 2 and 3 reactors, which are believed to still contain some fuel, but the cooling system itself is unstable. If the fuel were to become overheated again and melt, coming into contact with water and trigger a steam explosion, more radioactive materials will be released.

We are now head to head with a situation that mankind has never faced before.

Mainichi also [reports](#):

The Ground Self-Defense Force (GSDF) and residents of the zone between 20 and 30 kilometers from the stricken Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant held an emergency evacuation drill on Sept. 12 ... in preparation for any further large-scale emission of radioactive materials from the plant.

The scenario for the drill presupposed further meltdown of the Fukushima plant's No. 3 reactor core, and a local accumulation of radioactive materials emitting 20 millisieverts of radiation within the next four days. ...

And nuclear [expert](#) Paul Gunter says that we face a “China Syndrome”, where the fuel from the reactor cores at Fukushima have melted through the container vessels, into the ground, and are hitting groundwater and creating [highly-radioactive steam](#):

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