

# Radioactivity: New Regulation for Fukushima Schools

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### **Fukushima school limit: 1 millisievert**

The education ministry said Friday it has set a new nonbinding target to reduce radiation exposure of Fukushima Prefecture students while they are at school to 1 millisievert or less a year.

An earlier - and binding - regulation that allowed more exposure has drawn strong criticism from parents and activists fearing that radiation from the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant could harm children's health.

To achieve the new target, the ministry said it will provide subsidies to cover most of the costs to remove the surface soil of schoolyards in Fukushima Prefecture if radiation of 1 microsievert or more is detected.

"We have taken the measure (of setting the new target) so children and their parents can feel relieved," education minister Yoshiaki Takagi was quoted as saying.

The ministry in April set a limit of 3.8 microsieverts per hour for children while in school playgrounds in the prefecture. Together with estimated exposure at home and elsewhere, the exposure of children could be up to 20 millisieverts per year, according to an estimate by the ministry as of April 19.

If the new target is achieved, the total dose of children will be less than 10 millisieverts per year, based on the same formula used by the ministry in April.

The legal limit for a nuclear plant worker is a total of 100 millisieverts over five years, although the ceiling has been raised to 250 millisieverts for the people trying to bring the stricken nuclear plant under control. Children are considered more vulnerable to radiation than adults.

The ministry will cover most of the soil-removal costs for public schools from kindergartens through high schools. Local governments will have to pay the remaining costs. It hasn't decided yet what portion of the costs it will cover for private institutions.

By Monday, the prefectural government will provide a Geiger counter to all schools, including kindergartens, in Fukushima. The ministry said every school will start measuring radiation in students next month.

By **MIZUHO AOKI and REIJI YOSHIDA**, *Japan Times* Staff writers, May 28, 2011

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/nn20110528a1.html>

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### **Fukushima Pref. teachers get dosimeters**

FUKUSHIMA—Teachers were given dosimeters Friday to measure radiation at kindergartens and schools throughout Fukushima Prefecture as the crippled Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant continues to release radioactive substances.

The dosimeters were handed to representatives of 1,169 kindergartens, primary, middle, high and other schools during morning and afternoon meetings in a culture center in Tamura in the prefecture on Friday.

At the morning session, an education ministry official showed about 500 representatives how to use the devices.

Teachers carrying the devices will take radiation measurements on their arrival and departure from their schools. Data will be reported to the ministry once a month or so via the prefectural board of education.

“We’re learning about the amount of radiation people are exposed to at school. This is part of our efforts to help make children and their parents feel safe and secure,” a prefectural board of education official said.

**Yomiuri Shimbun** , May, 28, 2011

<http://www.yomiuri.co.jp/dy/national/T110527005113.htm>

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