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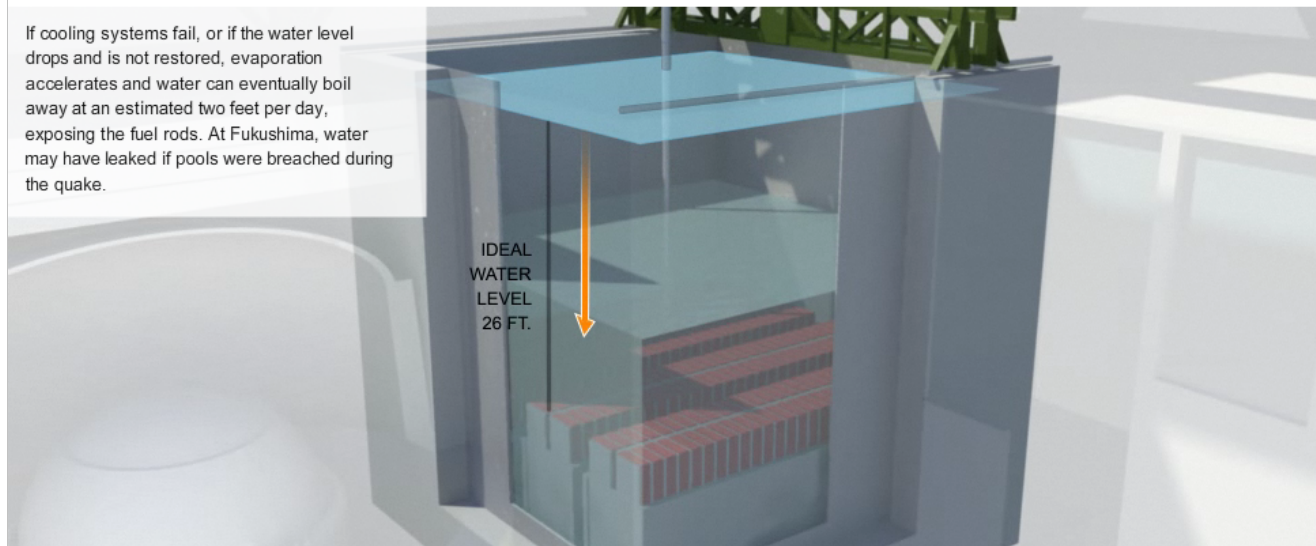
UPDATED March 18, 2011

Hazards of Storing Spent Fuel

Dangerous conditions can occur if water drains from pools storing radioactive fuel rods.

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If cooling systems fail, or if the water level drops and is not restored, evaporation accelerates and water can eventually boil away at an estimated two feet per day, exposing the fuel rods. At Fukushima, water may have leaked if pools were breached during the quake.



By XAQUÍN G.V., BILL MARSH, DYLAN McCLAIN and GRAHAM ROBERTS | Send Feedback

Sources: Nuclear Energy Institute; David A. Lochbaum, Union of Concerned Scientists; Margaret Harding, 4 Factor Consulting; Arnold Gundersen, Fairewinds Associates; International Atomic Energy Agency

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