

EDITION: INTERNATIONAL | U.S. | MÉXICO | ARABIC

Set edition preference


[Home](#) | [Video](#) | [World](#) | **[U.S.](#)** | [Africa](#) | [Asia](#) | [Europe](#) | [Latin America](#) | [Middle East](#) | [Business](#) | [World](#)

Navy says radiation releases pose challenging environment

By **Larry Shaughnessy**, CNN

March 16, 2011 -- Updated 1123 GMT (1923 HKT)



U.S. Navy helicopters take off from the USS Ronald Reagan on Tuesday to provide aid for Japanese earthquake victims.

STORY HIGHLIGHTS

Second incident occurs where helicopter crew tests positive for low-level radiation

"This will continue to happen," spokesman says

Most U.S. Navy vessels off Japan involved in helicopter relief operations

Tune in to CNN Tuesday night at 8 ET for special editions of "In the Arena," "Piers Morgan Tonight" and "AC360°." Anderson Cooper, Dr. Sanjay Gupta and Soledad O'Brien report live from Japan on the quake and tsunami's catastrophic effects. Are you there? [Share your photos and videos](#) if you can do so safely.

Washington (CNN) -- The ongoing radioactivity releases from damaged nuclear reactors in Japan after last week's historic earthquake are creating "one of the most challenging humanitarian operations ever conducted," according to Cmdr. Jeff Davis, a spokesman for the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet in Japan.

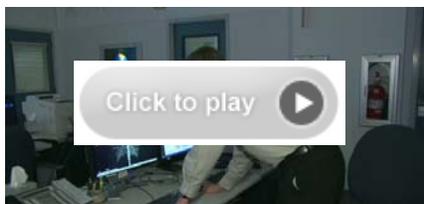
Davis said Tuesday that for the second time, U.S. helicopter crews have been exposed to elevated, albeit low, levels of radiation during flights near Japan's nuclear reactors. In addition, the Navy is moving three incoming ships to a new location because of "radiological and navigation hazards" at their intended destination on the eastern coast of Honshu, according to Davis.

Just as in an incident on Sunday, the crew members were stripped of contaminated clothing, scrubbed down with soap and water and tested. In all cases, they no longer tested positive for radiation exposure.

On Sunday, tests detected low levels of radioactivity on 17 U.S. Navy helicopter crew members when they returned to the USS Ronald Reagan after conducting disaster relief missions in Japan, the military said Monday.



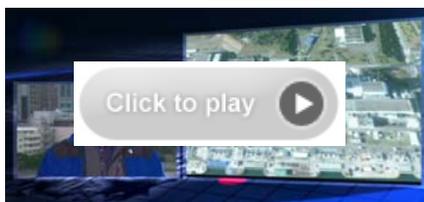
Japan's emperor: Be hopeful



Officials monitor radiation



Nuclear crisis in Japan escalates



Radiation risks rise in Japan

No further contamination was detected after the crew members washed with soap and water, the Navy said. Nevertheless, the U.S. 7th Fleet has temporarily repositioned its ships and planes away from the damaged multi-unit Fukushima nuclear plant. The Navy, however, noted that the most radiation that ship personnel could have received was less than they would receive in a month of exposure to natural radiation sources, such as the rocks, soil and sun.

"This will continue to happen," Davis said. He did not know how many personnel tested positive for radiological contamination in the second incident nor what ships they were on. Most of the nine U.S. Navy warships now operating off Japan are involved in helicopter operations.

For example, the USS Ronald Reagan Carrier Strike Group flew 29 sorties on Tuesday and delivered 17 tons of supplies, including food, water and blankets. The USS Tortuga is transporting 300 Japan Ground Self Defense Force personnel and 90 vehicles.

Officials expect that air crew members will continue to be exposed to increased low levels of radiation, so the Navy is telling helicopter crews to keep their sleeves rolled down and keep cabin windows closed when possible.

And some air crew members, Davis said, have been given potassium iodide pills. The iodide protects a person's

RELATED TOPICS[Japan](#)[U.S. Navy](#)[Nuclear Energy](#)

thyroid gland from the effects of radioactivity and can reduce the threat of thyroid cancer.

U.S. Navy spokesman Capt. Danny Hernandez said the iodide pills were given as a "precautionary measure only."

The U.S. Army's Camp Zama, about 25 miles outside Tokyo, is also taking steps in light of the potential radiation threat.

According to messages posted on U.S. Army - Japan's official Facebook page, health officials have been taking "environmental radiation readings every 3 hrs" since Monday.

"All readings taken to date have indicated absolutely no health risk to our community," the message read.

Nonetheless, the message noted that readings showed "negligible levels" that require the implementation of "mitigating measures," including limiting outdoor activities, leaving windows closed and keeping children inside for playtime and school recess.

The radiation exposure appears limited to Navy personnel. Representatives for the Marines and Air Force said they have not seen reports of anyone in their services testing positive for exposure.

The Navy has three ships with the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit on their way to Japan. They are expected to arrive on March 17. Out of concern about radiation, those ships, the USS Essex, USS Harpers Ferry and USS Germantown, will now position in the Sea of Japan on the west coast of Honshu, rather than the east coast, to aid in disaster relief.

333 recommendations. [Sign Up](#) to see what your friends recommend.

FOLLOW THIS TOPIC 

We recommend

[Mother gives hours-old baby girl to California firefighters](#)

[Navy announces actions against officers for controversial videos](#)

['Conclusive evidence' that F-22 pilot did not survive crash](#)

From around the web

[Which of the following can help prevent a hangover?](#)
(College Health Guru)

[Donald Trump Has 'Doubt' That Obama Was Born in the U.S.](#) (Politics Daily)

[Is Running the Best Exercise to Lose Weight?](#)
(LIVESTRONG.COM)

S
7:
S
fr
[W](#)
R
C
u
[W](#)
E
"
F
[W](#)

[U.S. military considering mandatory evacuations in Yokosuka](#)

[Celebrities With Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder \(Health.com\)](#)

[U.S. troops kept far away from Japan's burning nuclear reactors](#)

[Signs That Men Are Cheating \(LIVESTRONG.COM\)](#)

[what's this]

Sponsored links

Emergency Medical Tech.

Emergency Medical Technician Accelerated Course online materials www.link2life.org

Career Training School

Find Hands-on Career Training. Short-term Classes 800-818-4640. Goto.Everest.edu

Earthquake Survival Kits

Stay Safe 72 Hours After Disaster Buy Directly from the Manufacturer. www.QuakeKare.com

soundoff (52 Comments)

Show: [Newest](#) | [Oldest](#) | [Most liked](#)



Gabecat



Hearing reports that China has discovered radioactive contaminated goods shipped from Japan. They are now imposing restrictions. CNN how about getting someone on this developing story.

6 days ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



rbtbdo

James1900s I hope everyone realizes that this is a fairytale of fear put together and paid for by big energy from natural resources moneyFALSE FEARS Ask the people in Japan how false their fear they are feeling is. It can happen any time any where, and if mother nature decides to attack, there isn'... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



UBWhite

Where were the troops in U.S. it took a month to show up in New Orleans & Gulf, B.P. (British Petroleum) disaster and the U.S. Gov. ain't done sh-t. The after pictures of Japan look like our country after the Japs stole our jobs for the wealthy white americans. Do not worry Americans. Our Gov. t... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



xordon

the spikes in radiation count means turbulent air blowing the dust all around..

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



David70

Not so much that. At low level there will be a lot of variability in measuring exposure based on individual or given crew's contamination measurements

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)

Lc
Si
to
cc



mark3575

The U.S. Navy is well prepared for any situation involving possible nuclear radiation

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



David70

they are well educated on it but in terms of necessary resources to handle it, they have no where near the capability..

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



dugstew

Without a lot of people working many hard hours on "technology," nobody would have been able to read your post. I wouldn't be able to respond to it from Playa Del Carmen, Mexico, while I am on vacation from my IT job back in the states. If you're so against technology, stay the heck off of the comp... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like \(3\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



clown99

Like it or not, this disaster is going to kill the nuclear industry in the US for the foreseeable future. Logic will not rule in this decision. A minor meltdown at 3mile killed nuclear power for over 30 years and this tragedy will similarly kill it in the US for another 30 years. Until this disaster ... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like \(2\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



dugstew

I apologize. This was suppose to be a reply to Robert1657's "opinion" piece. I'm new to this site and, like many IT guys, the technology confused me. Through hard work and perseverance, I eventually figured it out.

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



kd4pba

I am confused. I thought the the Military had NBC capability. Do we not have the equipment to deal with this?

1 week ago | [Like \(1\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



David70

no. What do you think NBC capability is? It is having some know how and some equipment. The US military has nowhere near the capabilities to hand a a single major nuclear disaster here never mind overseas.

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



dugualla

You have no idea what NBC capability means. All NBC means is the ability to detect and mitigate NBC exposure. They detected it and followed protocol, that WAS nbc in operation. They also have the ability to wash the ship down with sea water, which really pisses off the Deck Dept.

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



Gabecat

I haven't seen any announcements on restriction of Japanese food imports to the US due to radioactive contamination? How are we sure fish and other food imported are safe? How about electronic components that are made close to that region? Does US have ability to screen all imported products for ... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like \(5\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



Gabecat

Reports from China about radioactive goods from Japan discovered this morning .

6 days ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



Satago110

Something tells me they aren't doing too much harvesting or exporting at the moment, of safe or unsafe food.

1 week ago | [Like \(2\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



Dave254

"Navy says radiation releases pose challenging environment."

Did it taker an Admiral to concoct that brilliant statement?

1 week ago | [Like \(2\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



hxj0bow

Once again the witless press is tossing out words that they don't really understand. They have used the term "contamination" and "radiation exposure" as though they mean the same thing. A person can be exposed to radiation whit out being contaminated. Stripping someone to their birthday suit and s... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like \(8\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



docmxmd

Its a shame whats happening in Japan, I hope the rest of the world learn from this situation and realize that we are at nature's mercy. How hard is to fill the deserts with air solar panels and the costal areas with air turbines, instead of filling the earth with nuke stations and CO2 from fossil fu... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like \(16\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



docmxmd

What do you think the answer is then fablaam?...

6 days ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



Gabecat

Environmentalists are fighting solar in deserts and they don't like wind turbines because they kill birds! Much better to allow continued use of nukes . Crazy stuff.

1 week ago | [Like \(2\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



fablaam

Yes, let's cover out Earth in extremely inefficient solar arrays. That's a great idea. When they make a solar panel that can absorb 75% or more of the sun's energy, then I'll hop on board.

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)



JoelUpchurch

I'm a little concerned about the Navy decision to deploy the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit to the west coast of Honshu instead of the east coast. Most of the port facilities on the east coast were destroyed by the tsunami, so the amphibious capabilities of the 31st would be much more valuable on th... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like \(7\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



JoelUpchurch

We have civilians out there that are dying and there is no reason? Frankly, the whole thing smells like a decision made in Washington. The 31st MEU was on their way to a disaster relief exercise before they were ordered to turn around.

The men and women of the 31st MEU are first responders being pre... [more](#)

1 week ago | [Like \(1\)](#) | [Report abuse](#)



David70

the radiation moves west to east out to sea. No reason at all to expose our service members. And "amphibious capability" is not at all the same as ports.

1 week ago | [Like](#) | [Report abuse](#)

| [View all comments](#)



7°

HI 14° LO 5°

London, United Kingdom [Weather forecast](#)

[Home](#) | [Video](#) | [World](#) | [U.S.](#) | [Africa](#) | [Asia](#) | [Europe](#) | [Latin America](#) | [Middle East](#) | [Business](#) | [World Sport](#) | [E Tools & Widgets](#) | [RSS](#) | [Podcasts](#) | [Blogs](#) | [CNN Mobile](#) | [My Profile](#) | [E-mail Alerts](#) | [CNN Radio](#) | [CNN Shop](#) | [Site i](#)