


United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission Official Hearing Exhibit	
In the Matter of:	Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. (Indian Point Nuclear Generating Units 2 and 3)
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Decontamination effort starts in Fukushima exclusion zone

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By TAKASHI SUGIMOTO / Staff Writer

OKUMA, Fukushima Prefecture--The central government started decontamination operations in evacuated areas near the crippled Fukushima nuclear power plant on Nov. 18.

About 30 workers, some employed by Obayashi Corp., the construction company commissioned to undertake the project, used survey meters to measure radiation doses in the air near the Okuma town office, about 4 kilometers west of the plant.

Okuma is one of 12 municipalities in the 20-kilometer no-entry zone around the nuclear plant and the "planned evacuation zone" beyond that radius, picked for pilot decontamination programs ahead of a full-scale decontamination effort scheduled to start in January.

The Japan Atomic Energy Agency, which commissioned the Okuma project, said it will target a 5-hectare area around the town office and another 5 hectares containing woodland and farmland.

Radiation levels will first be measured at 400 locations in each area, at 10-meter intervals. Those measurements will be used to draw up detailed decontamination plans.

On Nov. 18, workers detected radiation levels of between 10 and 17 microsieverts per hour at a height of 1 meter above the ground. However, in at least one location dosimeters returned maximum readings near tree roots, indicating a radiation level of 30 microsieverts per hour or more.

While the technical preparations continue, other major obstacles remain for the decontamination program. In many municipalities, for instance, the local residents have yet to agree on the locations of temporary depots where contaminated soil will be deposited.

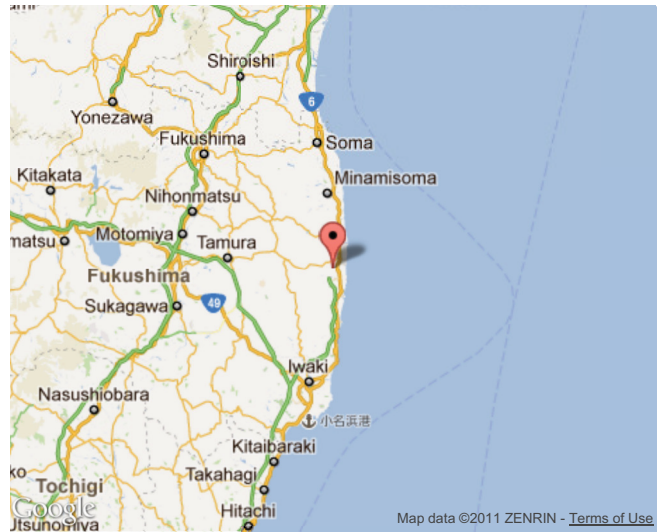
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Workers measure radiation levels on Nov. 18 near the Okuma town office, 4 kilometers from the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear power plant. (Naoko Kawamura)



Okuma town office

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