

Tokyo Hit With Fukushima Radiation

By [Washington's Blog](#)

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Region: [Asia](#)

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CNN [reports](#) today:

An extraordinarily high level of radiation was detected in one spot in a central Tokyo residential district Thursday, prompting the local government to cordon off the small area, local officials said.

Radiation levels were higher in Tokyo's Setagaya ward than in the evacuation area around the badly damaged Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, according to ward Mayor Nobuto Hosaka.

"We are shocked to see such high radiation level was detected in our neighborhood. We cannot leave it as is," Hosaka told reporters.

But the tsunami-struck Fukushima plant may not be the source of the radiation, Hosaka said later on state television.

Officials searching for the cause found "glass bottles in a cardboard box" in the basement of a house in the neighborhood which sent radiation detectors off the charts, he said on NHK.

"We suspect these bottles in basement could be the cause of the high radiation reading and we are hastily working to confirm it," he said.

Radiation experts are now checking what contaminated the bottles, a Setagaya ward official told CNN, declining to be named in line with policy.

Perhaps it is just some random contaminated bottles.

But as the Wall Street Journal [reported](#) yesterday:

Japanese researchers discovered high levels of radioactive material in concentrated areas in Tokyo and Yokohama, more than 241 kilometers away from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear plant, as increasingly thorough tests provide a clearer picture of just how far contamination has spread and accumulated

In Tokyo, a sidewalk in Setagaya ward, in the western part of the city, recorded radiation levels of 2.707 microsieverts per hour, about 50 times higher than another location in Setagaya where the ward regularly monitors radiation levels....

In Yokohama, the local government said last month that it detected 40,200 becquerels of radioactive cesium per kilogram of sediments collected from one part of a roadside ditch....

Yokohama is investigating another spot on an apartment rooftop where tests conducted by a local private research institute detected more than 60,000 becquerels of radioactive cesium per a kilogram of sediments.

The Journal also notes that these radioactive hotspots were not found through routine tests, but only because some residents walked around with geiger counters:

Both Setagaya Ward and Yokohama discovered those concentrated spots after residents carrying their radiation measuring devices noticed such spots and reported it to local officials.

The Australian [noted](#) today:

Strontium 90, a highly dangerous radioactive isotope, has reportedly been found atop an apartment building in Yokohama, fuelling fears that fallout from the Fukushima disaster has affected the greater Tokyo area.

Yokohama, a city of 3.6 million people, effectively adjoins the Japanese capital, and sits about 250km from the stricken Fukushima nuclear plant. [...]

And ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation) [reported](#) yesterday:

Elevated levels of radioactive strontium, which can cause cancer, have been found 250 kilometres from the stricken Fukushima nuclear plant.

The find in the city of Yokohama has heightened fears that radiation has spread further than the Japanese government has acknowledged.

As I've previously noted, [Japanese government officials and high-level scientists have considered evacuating Tokyo](#). I hope and pray that these high readings are not the start of worse to come.

In related news, [plutonium was found 28 miles from Fukushima](#) and:

The latest discovery is a potentially disturbing turn, as it shows that people relatively far from the plant could be exposed to more dangerous elements than had been previously disclosed.

The Japanese government's response? [To stop testing for plutonium, and to tell people they shouldn't use geiger counters to test for themselves](#).

The Japanese government has been caught [blatantly under-reporting radiation levels in general](#), and Japanese professors are [starting to fear for Japan's future](#).

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