Measures against radioactive materials in tap water

Restriction of tap water intake

The intake restriction was implemented by local authorities who detected radioactive materials above the index levels (*) upon requested by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (MHLW).

(*) MHLW adopted the values which had been set before the occurrence of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

I-131: 300 Bq/kg for the general public, 100 Bq/kg for infants; Cs-134+137: 200 Bq/kg

Status of intake restriction

- Intake restriction for infants was implemented in 20 water supply utilities in a total of 5 prefectures from 21 March to 10 May 2011.
- Intake restriction for the general public was implemented in a small scale water supply utility in Fukushima prefecture from 21 March to 1 April 2011.
- No restriction has been implemented since 10 May 2011.

Interim report of the review meeting

- Published on 21 July 2011. Based on the report, MHLW revised the monitoring policy on 30 July 2011.
- Unless a large amount of radioactive materials is released again from the nuclear power plant, tap water has low probability to require measures such as intake restriction.
- Monitoring should be performed continuously.

Results of surveys

Based on the monitoring policy, focused monitoring has been performed regularly in Fukushima prefecture and its 10 neighboring prefectures.

- Radioactive iodine was detected in tap water in 15 out of 47 prefectures, mainly in 18-29 March 2011.
- Radioactive cesium was detected in 10 prefectures though the concentration was generally low compared with that of radioactive iodine.
- The concentration of radioactive materials in tap water has been under the detection level or minute since April 2011.

Monitoring manual

Established regarding the directions of monitoring devices, detection level, measuring time, etc.

Establishment of the management target level (1 April 2012)

- Index levels were reviewed considering the establishment of new standard limits for radionuclides in food based on the Food Sanitation Act.
- The target level for management of radioactive materials in tap water has newly established as 10 Bq/kg as the sum of cesium-134 and cesium-137, which has replaced the previous index levels.