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NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Statement from California's Department of Public Health and Emergency Management Agency on Risk of Radiation Exposure

SACRAMENTO - Today the interim director of the California Department of Public Health, Dr. Howard Backer, and acting secretary of the California Emergency Management Agency, Mike Dayton, issued the following statement emphasizing Californians' safety from radiation exposure and the risks of taking potassium iodide as a precautionary measure.

"The safety of all Californians is our highest priority, and we are in constant contact with the federal agencies responsible for monitoring radiation levels across the West Coast.

We want to emphasize that the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services have all stated that there is no risk expected to California or its residents as a result of the situation in Japan.

We are actively monitoring the situation in Japan and are ready to take all steps necessary to protect Californians should risks develop.

We urge Californians to not take potassium iodide as a precautionary measure. It is not necessary given the current circumstances in Japan, it can present a danger to people with allergies to iodine, shellfish or who have thyroid problems, and taken inappropriately it can have serious side effects including abnormal heart rhythms, nausea, vomiting, electrolyte abnormalities and bleeding.

Our thoughts are with the people of Japan at this tragic time."

Californians with questions about radiation exposure can contact the California Department of Public Health's Emergency Operations information line at 916 341-3947.

For updated information on monitoring, response and relief efforts in California and Japan, please visit the California Emergency Management Agency website at www.calema.ca.gov.

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