

# JOINT EPA/FDA STATEMENT: Update on Ongoing Monitoring

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**WASHINGTON** – In response to the ongoing situation in Japan, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has taken steps to increase the level of nationwide monitoring of milk, precipitation, drinking water, and other potential exposure routes.

EPA conducts radiological monitoring of milk under its RADNET program, while the U.S. Food and Drug Administration has jurisdiction over the safety, labeling and identity of milk and milk products in interstate commerce. States have jurisdiction over those facilities located within their territory.

Results from a screening sample taken March 25 from Spokane, Wash. detected 0.8 pCi/L of iodine-131, which is more than 5,000 times lower than the Derived Intervention Level set by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. These types of findings are to be expected in the coming days and are far below levels of public health concern, including for infants and children. Iodine-131 has a very short half-life of approximately eight days, and the level detected in milk and milk products is therefore expected to drop relatively quickly.

“Radiation is all around us in our daily lives, and these findings are a minuscule amount compared to what people experience every day. For example, a person would be exposed to low levels of radiation on a round trip cross country flight, watching television, and even from construction materials,” said Patricia Hansen, an FDA senior scientist.

EPA’s recommendation to state and local governments is to continue to coordinate closely with EPA, FDA and CDC. EPA will continue to communicate our nationwide sampling results as they come in.

EPA: <http://www.epa.gov/japan2011>

FDA: <http://www.fda.gov/NewsEvents/PublicHealthFocus/ucm247403.htm>