

## Governor Quinn Announces Illinois Relief Effort to Help Victims of Japan Quake and Tsunami

Written by Laurel White  
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### *State will Supply 2,000 Radiation Detectors; Illinois Farmers to Donate Vital Supplies*

CHICAGO – April 15, 2011. Governor Pat Quinn today announced a statewide humanitarian relief effort to harness Illinois' technological and agricultural resources to provide vital supplies for the victims of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami in Japan. The Illinois Emergency Management Agency (IEMA) will donate 2,000 critically-needed radiation detectors to assist the relief effort, and a collective response by the Illinois agricultural community will help supply much-needed *agricultural products to Japan*. The Governor's announcement marks the first statewide effort in the U.S. to pool resources and aid for the people of Japan.

"The people of Japan are our good friends, and the State of Illinois, our business community and our farmers are all working together to help them get back on their feet," said Governor Quinn. "We are working across Illinois to provide resources that address Japan's immediate needs, such as radiation detectors to help Japan with its efforts around the damaged Fukushima nuclear plant. And our farmers are stepping up to make donations from their harvests, so that we can help the Japanese people over the longer-term."

"Japan was struck by an unprecedented disaster, and the Government of Japan is doing everything possible to address the damage," said George Hisaeda, Consul General of Japan at Chicago. "Words cannot express how deeply Japan appreciates the major donation by the State of Illinois, thanks to Governor Quinn's leadership. Illinois is a true friend of Japan, and this partnership will help Japan will recover and prosper."

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The earthquake and tsunami on March 11 has caused more than 13,000 to lose their lives, with more than 14,000 still missing and more than 100,000 without homes. In addition, radioactive contamination was released at the crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Illinois' donation of 2,000 personal radiation detectors with chargers, batteries and heat covers will support the operations of organizations, such as Japan's Nuclear and Industrial Safety Agency, in their ongoing efforts to monitor and minimize the impacts of the disaster.

The radiation detectors are part of the state's Preventive Radiological and Nuclear Detection (PRND) program. Law enforcement officers and firefighters are equipped with the detectors to alert them to potentially hazardous radiological materials they may encounter in the line of duty. Launched in 2009, the PRND program has deployed more than 1,200 detectors to more than 100 local law enforcement agencies and fire departments throughout the state.

"The need in Japan for these detectors is immediate," said Jonathon Monken, director of the Illinois Emergency Management Agency and the state's Homeland Security Adviser to the Governor. "Illinois' world-class nuclear safety program enables us to help in this unprecedented situation."

Illinois-based Caterpillar Logistics Services, Inc. (Cat Logistics), a wholly owned subsidiary of Caterpillar Inc., is providing transportation for the radiation detection devices from Illinois to Japan at no cost to the State of Illinois.

"On behalf of all Caterpillar employees, in particular our 23,000 employees in Illinois and the 5,000 employees we have in Japan, we are pleased to lend a hand and donate the transportation costs for this important humanitarian effort," said Steve Larson, Vice President of Caterpillar Inc. and Chairman and President of Cat Logistics.

The radiation equipment was originally purchased for \$1.3 million by the Illinois Law Enforcement Alarm System (ILEAS) with federal homeland security grants provided by the Illinois Terrorism Task Force. Since the equipment was purchased with homeland security funds Illinois received from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS), state officials sought and received clearance from DHS before finalizing the donation.

Detector deployment in Illinois will remain unaffected by the donation; nearly 3,000 additional

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detectors are currently on hand in Illinois.

In addition, two state agencies, the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), have been working with agricultural producers and processors on a comprehensive plan to help address Japan's longer-term food needs. Discussions have been held with the Consulate General of Japan at Chicago, Japan External Trade Organization, and Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries in Japan to identify the areas of need that can be fulfilled through the relief effort.

*“Japan is one of Illinois’ largest trading partners. We have a strong economic relationship, including hundreds of millions of dollars in agricultural trade alone each year,” said Warren Ribley, DECO director. “After a calamity of this magnitude, the needs of the Japanese people will vary over the short and long-term, and the plan the Governor is announcing today will allow agricultural producers across Illinois to work in concert to respond to those essential and diverse needs.”*

*Partners such as ADM, Illinois River Energy and the Illinois Farm Bureau/Country Financial have already acknowledged their commitment to assisting the people of Japan with hundreds of thousands in cash contributions. The plan currently in development will devise the best and most efficient delivery system to provide the greatest result for the people of Japan and mobilize all segments of the Illinois agricultural industry – individual farm producers, the commodity associations, agricultural associations and the food processing industry – to respond.*

“In Illinois and in the agriculture community, we understand the importance of lending a helping hand in a time of need,” said Tom Jennings, director of the Illinois Department of Agriculture. “The current challenges for the Japanese government are immense, and we recognize the need

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*to plan now to best maximize the impact of the assistance that will be provided by Illinois' vast agricultural resources come harvest time."*

"Farmers by their nature are willing to lend assistance to those in need," said Illinois Farm Bureau President Philip Nelson. "We are in a global economy. We need to help each other out of difficult situations."

Japan is the world's largest net importer of food products. The nation of more than 127 million people imports 60 percent of its food supply, about \$50 billion of food each year. Disruption of trade and the Japanese agricultural industry due to the earthquake and tsunami make Japan more reliant on agricultural aid as the country recovers from this disaster.

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