

Decontamination Methods

Decontamination has been conducted in accordance with the circumstances of respective areas.
Specific methods differ by location.

Effective methods differ depending on the status of contamination with radioactive materials. First, ambient dose rates are measured, and an optimal method is selected on a case-by-case basis. Radiation doses are measured before and after decontamination work to confirm the effects.



This figure explains specific decontamination methods.

Even in areas where radiation doses are relatively low, fallen leaves and dirt containing radioactive materials are apt to accumulate under the leaves or in gutters of houses or in ditches on the street, causing higher ambient doses in the surrounding areas. At such locations, fallen leaves and dirt are removed and the relevant places are washed and cleaned.

There are areas where radioactive materials adhere to the shrubbery, underbrush or fallen leaves. Radioactive materials are removed through mowing of vegetation, pruning and removal of fallen leaves.

In areas where radiation doses are relatively high, other decontamination methods, in addition to those employed at areas with relatively low radiation doses, may need to be employed. For example, as radioactive materials mostly exist within a layer a few centimeters below the ground surface, effects of radioactive materials can be mostly diminished by stripping topsoil (for example, to a depth of 5 cm) or replacing topsoil with subsoil.

Areas where radioactive materials adhere to roofs and walls of buildings or on the paved road, relevant parts are washed and cleaned but such method may not be effective in cases where radioactive materials adhere firmly depending on the nature of their raw materials.

For farmland, proper methods need to be selected in consideration of the effects on agricultural products, as well as the effects on people due to exposure. In farmland plowed after the accident, radioactive materials exist little deeper from the ground surface. However, if all contaminated soil is removed, the farmland becomes unsuitable for farming. Therefore, at such farmland, various methods such as deep tillage (plowing soil as deep as 30 cm in principle) or inversion tillage (replacing topsoil with subsoil) (p.66 of Vol. 2, "Measures for Reducing Transfer of Radioactive Materials to Crops (1/5) - Decontamination of Farmland -") are being employed.

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