

For Immediate Release

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**SECRETARY OF HEALTH ISSUES STATEMENT
ON NUCLEAR DISASTER IN JAPAN**

(Santa Fe) – The New Mexico Department of Health Secretary, Dr. Catherine Torres, has issued a statement regarding the damaged nuclear reactor situation in Japan. “The Department of Health is working closely with state and federal agencies to monitor the crisis in Japan,” says Dr. Torres. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has a nationwide air monitoring system, RadNet, in place to track radiation in the United States. The system monitors the nation’s air and regularly monitors drinking water, milk, and precipitation for environmental radiation. All information continues to indicate that Hawaii, Alaska, the U.S. Territories, and the U.S. West Coast are not expected to experience any harmful levels of radioactivity from the damaged Japanese power plants. “The radiation levels are not expected to reach New Mexico,” adds Dr. Torres.

According to a U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) official, “Radiation containment units at Japan’s nuclear reactors are intact and the situation at the plant is on the verge of stabilizing.” Offsite power is close to being available for use at plant equipment.

It is not recommended to purchase or take potassium iodide tablets, an over the counter medication, in response to this event. This product is generally prescribed or recommended to those who are in close proximity to a nuclear event.

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