

County of San Luis Obispo

COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER, RM. D430 • SAN LUIS OBISPO, CALIFORNIA 93408 • (805) 781-5011



JIM GRANT
COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Please read editor's note regarding immediate rumor control issue (March 15, 2011)

NEWS RELEASE

FROM THE COUNTY OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES and
THE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Contact: Ron Alsop, Emergency Services Manager, Office of Emergency Services (805) 781-5011
Michelle Shoresman, Public Health Emergency Preparedness Program Manager,
(805) 788-2067

County Provides Potassium Iodide Information

San Luis Obispo, CA, March 15, 2011 – As a result of a number of inquiries from the public to the San Luis Obispo County Public Health Department and the Office of Emergency Services regarding potassium iodide, County Public Health and the Office of Emergency Services are providing the following information.

Potassium iodide is not an “anti-radiation” pill. It is a supplemental protective measure, secondary to evacuation or sheltering in place. Evacuation and sheltering in place remain the primary protective actions during a radiological emergency.

Potassium iodide protects the thyroid gland by satisfying its requirement for iodine. When taken under the direction of state or local public health officials, potassium iodide is absorbed into the thyroid gland, thus protecting it from absorbing any radioactive iodide.

Where Can I Get Potassium Iodide?

Potassium Iodide continues to be available for residents who live or work in the Emergency Planning Zone (EPZ) surrounding the Diablo Canyon Power Plant. San Luis Obispo County residents who live or work in the Emergency Planning Zone can bring in their voucher to pick up their free potassium iodide supply. The voucher is also available on the County's Public Health website.

Locations currently distributing Potassium Iodide to EPZ residents:

San Luis Obispo Office, 2191 Johnson Ave., San Luis Obispo (805) 781-5500

Grover Beach Office, 286 S. 16th St., Grover Beach (805) 473-7050

Dana Nelson's HealthPlus Pharmacy, 948-A East Foothill Blvd., San Luis Obispo (805) 543-5950
Medicine Shoppe, 1199 Los Osos Valley Rd., Los Osos (805) 528-1447
BestCare Pharmacy, 1051 East Grand Ave., Arroyo Grande (805) 481-1961

Potassium Iodide is also widely available from commercial manufacturers:

Iosat (866) 463-6754 <http://www.anbex.com/>

ThyroShield (636) 343-8200 <http://www.thyroshield.com>

How do I know if I live in the Emergency Planning Zone?

An EPZ map is available on the San Luis Obispo County Office of Emergency Services website at www.slocountyoes.com or you can refer to the full size version of the AT&T phone book with information beginning on page A22.

When should I take Potassium Iodide?

Potassium Iodide should only be ingested at the direction of the County Health Officer.

Potassium Iodide is only a supplementary protective measure. Evacuation or Shelter-in-Place is the primary public safety measure. If the County Health Officer deems the ingestion of potassium iodide appropriate following a release of radiation in SLO County, the public will be alerted through the Emergency Alert System.

Will potassium iodide be needed due to the emergency at the Japanese nuclear power plant?

No, potassium iodide is not needed due to the emergency in Japan. You will only be advised to ingest potassium iodide following a release of radiation from Diablo Canyon Power Plant. Any release of radiation from nuclear power plants in other regions cannot emit radiation at levels that would necessitate the ingestion of potassium iodide by residents of San Luis Obispo County.

Since Potassium Iodide is not needed due to the emergency in Japan, should I still come pick it up? Yes, we encourage residents who live in the Emergency Planning Zone to be prepared should an emergency occur at Diablo Canyon Power Plant. Residents should store their potassium iodide with their emergency kit and be prepared to ingest it should the County Health Officer advise doing so following a radioactive release from Diablo Canyon.

What if I do not live or work in the Emergency Planning Zone?

If you live or work outside of the Emergency Planning Zone you are not expected to need potassium iodide following an emergency at the Diablo Canyon Power Plant. You may choose to purchase potassium iodide through a commercial manufacturer.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: We have been informed at least one – and possibly more - local radio station is stating potassium iodide is available at the Sheriff's Department and citizens have physically showed up at the Sheriff's Department on Kansas Avenue. We are asking media to please notify the public potassium iodide is not available at the Sheriff's Department and to note the locations in this news release where it is available. Thank you. /Ron Alsop