

Q&A Related to Facilities that Can Act as Temporary Shelter During a Ballistic

Missile Launch Even When Outside of Operational Hours

Q1 Why are you designating facilities that can act as temporary shelters now?

A1 The J-Alert system was first used in Fukushima Prefecture on August 29 and September 15, 2017, in response to ballistic missiles launched by North Korea. Afterwards, however, we received feedback from residents such as “I don’t know where to run if I am outside at the time,” or “I was driving at the time, but the missile had already passed while I was searching for a building.”

It is feared that North Korea may fire ballistic missiles that pass over the Japanese archipelago in the future, including the Tohoku region, so the prefecture decided to open public access to prefectural buildings in order to strive for the safety and relief of our residents.

Q2 What kinds of institutions can be temporary shelters?

A2 Facilities that can respond 24/7 regardless of weekends and holidays, that:

(1) are always unlocked

(2) can be immediately unlocked as soon as a notification is sent through the J-Alert, etc.
(e.g. has a permanently stationed security guard)

Furthermore, they are ideally sturdy buildings (e.g. made of concrete).

Both missiles launched in 2017 were launched early in the morning, with the 8/29 missile launched at 5:58am, and the 9/15 missile launched at 6:57am.

Q3 How should I get information about a missile launch, etc.?

A3 Once information has been transmitted by the government via the J-Alert system, the emergency broadcasting system in each municipality will automatically broadcast the information. It will also be automatically sent to mobile phones and smartphones through an area email.

Q4 Who will be accepted inside?

A4 Those who are near a prefectural facility.

Concrete examples: those who have business related to the prefecture, those who don’t have business with the prefecture but are walking nearby, those driving cars or riding bicycles nearby, etc.

Those who live/work near a prefectural facility are not predicted to seek shelter there, as they should take shelter indoors where they are as a basic rule. (They are not predicted to seek

shelter there, but they will not be refused entry.)

Q5 Once inside, what are some concrete things we should do? (What is the function of the security personnel?)

A5 In order to avoid damage caused by the shock wave, shrapnel, etc., that may occur when the missile makes impact, guide people to rooms that do not have windows (including basements) whenever possible, and instruct them to protect their heads. If possible, please give instructions near the entrance to the building so the people in the surrounding area can understand easily.

Q6 There is only 1 security guard on closed days/during closed hours.

A6 We ask that the security guard respond appropriately upon receiving a sufficient explanation of the goal.

Q7 We don't have the proper space to accept people.

A7 While rooms without windows are ideal, this will be a response in a situation with very little time to react, so please accept people into the hallways. When accepting people into the facility, please guide people to places away from windows or to rooms without windows (including basements), and instruct them to protect their heads.

Q8 How long will people stay in the facility?

A8 If the missile passes overhead, and the 2nd J-Alert (5-10 minutes after the 1st J-Alert) announces "the missile has passed from the ~ area over the ~ area," there is no need to continue sheltering indoors, so people would only stay in the facility for 10-15 minutes after arriving.

However, if there is an announcement saying the missile has landed in Japanese territory whether land or sea, follow-up reports will be sent as well, so please allow people to continue taking shelter until that news comes.

Q9 How will the surrounding people know that the facility has been opened?

A9 Besides providing information through the prefectural reporters' club, information will also be disseminated through the prefecture homepage, public relations magazines, etc.

Q10 Are sites being opened in other prefectures as well?

A10 8 locations are being opened in Yamagata at the central and branch government offices, and at the central government offices in Akita prefecture as emergency temporary shelters.