

Earthquake in Japan (JWCU)
As of 11a.m. March 15, 2011

As you may already know, a massive earthquake of magnitude of 9.0 occurred Friday 11 March, off the Pacific coast of the northeastern part of the Japanese main land (Tohoku Region), causing devastating damages.

We truly appreciate your warm messages. We are so encouraged by your messages and grateful for your concern.

We would like to inform you that at least the headquarters of Japan Workers' Co-operative Union (JWCU) in Tokyo are fine (small property damages but no injury). However, we have several branches in Tohoku (northeastern) area, where the earthquake hit the hardest.

As of March 15th 11a.m., JWCU head office has the following information regarding the situation of our members.

- * Most of our members have been found safe. However, we have not been able to reach 2 of our member cooperatives. They are located in the area where the quake hit the hardest. In some units other than those 2, members are still trying to check the safety of each other. Phone systems are still not working too well (especially cell phones), so it is taking long.
- * There are some material damages (e.g., water leakage, broken glasses, cracks in a wall, etc.) in several units.
- * Some of our units (e.g. children's hall) are designated evacuation centers, and members working there are taking care of evacuees, meaning that those members have not been able to go home to care their own families.

In Tokyo area as well, we are starting to feel the effect. Shortage of gas is becoming serious (some gas stations have already closed, and others only sell 10 liters at a time). Also, because the nuclear power plants in Fukushima have been seriously damaged, power shortage is also a big concern, and starting this week, different municipalities in Tokyo metropolitan area are to take turn to have blackout for several hours a day. Trains are running less than half, which affect commuting of thousands of people.

We will keep you updated on our situation via e-mail and also here in this web site.

Again, we are so grateful for your kind support, and we hope we could do the same to you when things happen.