

Possible carcinogen high in Japan water

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A suspected carcinogenic chemical created in making water repellents is turning up in water supplies throughout Japan, with the worst levels around Osaka.

Professor Akio Koizumi of Kyoto University first checked about 80 points on rivers across the country in 2003 and detected perfluoro-octanoic acid, or PFOA, the Kyodo news agency reported Tuesday.

Because the highest readings from tap water were 300 times higher in Osaka than other places, Koizumi's report speculated the source of the contamination must be nearby, Kyodo said

Masatoshi Morita, a professor of environmental science at Ehime University, said little is known about the toxic nature of PFOA but the compound tends to accumulate in humans.

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