

Google to reshoot street views of Japanese cities

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(AP) -- Google said Wednesday it will reshoot all photos in Japan for its Street View service after residents complained the 360-degree panoramic images provided a view over the fences around their homes.

The Internet giant's service has triggered privacy complaints around the world, including most recently in Greece, where it was banned Tuesday.

The [photos](#) currently on the Web site were taken by cameras mounted on a stick attached to a car roof. Google Japan said it would lower the cameras after many residents said they were high enough to look over fences around their homes, company product manager Keiichi Kawai said in a statement.

Others have previously complained that [images](#) on the service recorded vehicle license plates and laundry hanging in backyards. Rights groups have also demanded Google suspend the service.

Kawai said Google's decision to lower the cameras is designed to address concerns in [Japan](#), where many neighborhoods are crowded and privacy is tightly guarded.

Google also has blurred vehicle license plates in the images.

Google, which has covered 12 major Japanese cities, including Tokyo and Osaka, will continue filming in the country.

"We admit that there were concerns about the service. ... People said we might have neglected the privacy issue," he wrote. "We took their opinions seriously and made careful considerations."

But Kawai stressed the service has many benefits, including saving many from getting lost.

Since it was launched in 2007, [Street View](#) has expanded to more than 100 cities worldwide. But it has drawn complaints from individuals and institutions that have been photographed, including the Pentagon, which barred Google last year from photographing U.S. military bases for Street View.

On Tuesday, a privacy watchdog in Greece banned [Google](#) from gathering images in the country for its Street View service until it provides more privacy guarantees than the current proposal to blur faces and vehicle license plates.

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