

Freescale to keep Sendai plant closed

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Freescale Semiconductor has decided against reopening its plant in Sendai after the massive earthquake and tsunami in northeastern Japan left it severely damaged.

The plant, which has 600 employees, had been due to be shuttered in December.

"The ongoing safety concerns, damage to infrastructure and other basic services in the region, compounded by numerous major aftershocks, prohibit Freescale from returning the facility to an operational level required for wafer fab production in a reasonable timeframe," the company said in a statement Tuesday.

It had immediately ceased operations after the earthquake struck off the coast of Sendai, and evacuated its employees.

Rich Beyer, Freescale's chairman and CEO, said the company would compensate its Sendai employees by continuing their salaries "for an extended period of time," along with a "comprehensive" severance package.

The Sendai facility produced microcontrollers, analog ICs ([integrated circuits](#)) and sensors products.

Built in 1987, it was originally conceived as a joint venture of Toshiba and [Motorola](#). Motorola's Semiconductor Products Sector, now Freescale, purchased the plant in 1999.

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