

Japan firm creates radiation-detecting plastic

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People line up for radiation screening at Koryama in Fukushima prefecture in March 2011. Japan's Teijin Chemicals Limited said Wednesday it had created a plastic that emits a blue light when exposed to radioactivity, which it says will lead to cheaper radiation detectors.

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It said it will soon produce a commercial version of the polyester resin -- named Scintirex and developed in collaboration with two universities -- enabling researchers and firms to create cheap detectors and medical devices.

Scintirex "will help to reduce the total cost of [radiation detectors](#) by slashing the production cost of scintillators to one tenth or less of current levels", the company said in a statement.

A scintillator is the core of a radiation detector.

A 9.0-magnitude quake and tsunami in Japan in March triggered the world's worst [nuclear crisis](#) since Chernobyl 25 years ago, with radiation leaking into the air, soil and sea from the damaged Fukushima Daiichi [nuclear power plant](#).

Thousands of people were evacuated from their homes and exports of certain foods halted amid radiation fears.

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