

# Street View shows Japan nuclear evacuation zone

September 5 2013

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This undated handout photograph taken in March, 2013 by Google Street View and received on March 28, 2013 shows a Google car mounted with a street view camera driving through a street in Namie Town, Fukushima Prefecture. Google began offering the chance for people to wander virtually through an abandoned town deep within the exclusion zone around Japan's crippled nuclear plant.

New explorable images from the Japanese coast devastated by an enormous tsunami have been posted online, allowing web users to see how the disaster changed the area.

The images, on Google's Street View, include pictures of towns and villages near the stricken Fukushima nuclear plant where [radiation levels](#) are still too high for people to return.

They show a mixed picture of progress, with some areas in which rebuilding is well under way, and others where nature appears to be reclaiming land on which decaying shells of buildings sit.

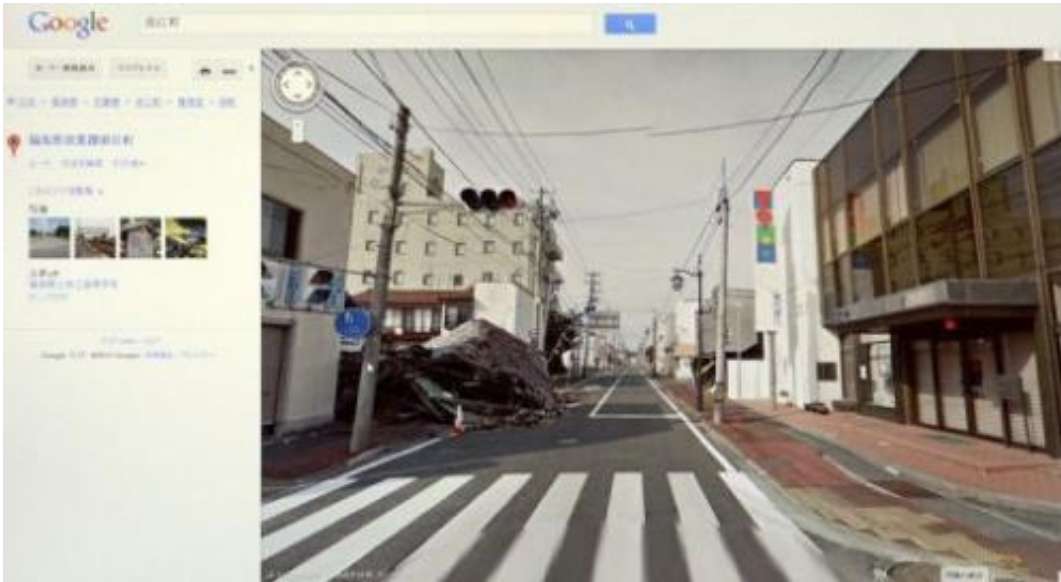
Users can explore the region as it looked before the disaster and, in many cases, can compare it with how it looked in the immediate aftermath and how it looks now.

The Internet giant is offering views of the deserted streets of 12 towns and villages in Fukushima prefecture, including Futaba and Okuma, where the crippled plant sits.

They also include other evacuation zones such as Iitate, Katsurao, Kawauchi, Naraha, Hirono, and Minamisoma in Fukushima prefecture.

The newly updated street views were taken between April and August this year, a Google spokeswoman in Japan said.

The images are part of a project named "Memories for the Future", which also comprises photos and movies uploaded by the general public.



This screen shot from Google Street View taken on March 28, 2013 shows a street scene in Namie Town, Fukushima Prefecture. Google began offering the chance for people to wander virtually through an abandoned town deep within the exclusion zone around Japan's crippled nuclear plant.

More than 18,000 people died when a 9.0 magnitude sub-sea earthquake sent a towering tsunami barrelling into Japan's northeast coast in March 2011.

Cooling systems at the Fukushima [nuclear plant](#) were knocked out, sending reactors into meltdown and forcing tens of thousands of people to flee.

Although no one is officially recorded as having died as a direct result of the radiation released, scientists warn some areas may remain contaminated for decades.

Google in March released panoramic views of Namie, a town located within the original 20-kilometre (12-mile) exclusion zone around the

plant.

The street views can be seen at: [www.miraikioku.com/en/](http://www.miraikioku.com/en/)

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