

“Uranium Soil” from Katamo All Hauled Away

On November 11, the Japan Atomic Energy Agency (JAEA) announced that it had completed all clearance and removal work on the waste rock from the Katamo Mound Deposit in Yurihama Town (Tottori Pref.).

The amount of the soil excavated from the site, located in the Katamo District in Yurihama Town, measures approximately 3,000m³. Of that, the part of the soil having a relatively high density of uranium – around 290m³ – will be refined in the United States and then sold off. The remaining 2,700m³ will be packed into bricks and reutilized. Starting on August 10 this year, the soil has been transported to a site slated for the construction of the brick factory on prefecture-owned land in Misasa Town. Construction will begin next spring on the plant, and after around a million bricks are manufactured there, it will be closed down by June 2011.

Upon completion of the work, JAEA Chairman Yuichi Tonozuka said, “I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all those involved in the clearance and removal work, which has ended today without delay. From now on, we will safely and steadily carry out the manufacture of bricks, based on the letter of agreement signed in May 2006 concerning the treatment of the disposed uranium soil from Katamo.

For details on the disposed uranium soil, refer to the FOCUS article, “Sound and Fury: The Tale of the Uranium Soil,” found in the Jan. 2005 edition of “Atoms in Japan.”

Editor: Noriyuki Ishii, JAIF