

## 1 About the Uzuma River Andon Festival

The Uzuma River Andon Festival, running until September 30, 2012, aims to infuse vibrant colors into the cityscape by adorning Uzuma River, which gracefully runs through the city center.

A total of 124 lanterns, adorned with paper cutouts, grace both banks of the river, stretching from the Kaiun Bridge to the Kourai Bridge and onward to Uzuma Park. These intricate paper cutouts are the masterpieces of the late Kawashima Gashu, a renowned paper cutout artist hailing from Tochigi City. They portray Ennin, also known as Jikaku Daishi, a celebrated Japanese monk from the Heian period, believed to be born in Iwafune town, along with depictions of warehouses and floats from Tochigi City.

Throughout the festival, these lanterns come to life, illuminating the riverbanks from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Please go savor the enchanting beauty of Tochigi in the evening this summer.

## 2 What You Can Do with Your My Number Card

When foreign residents initially arrive in Japan and apply for a resident card at the city office, they are assigned a 12-digit My Number card, which typically remains with them for life. This same number is also utilized when departing and returning to Japan to renew a resident card, and it cannot be altered.

Your My Number is a crucial identifier for various purposes, including applying for child allowances, pension benefits, filing tax returns, conducting financial transactions abroad, receiving international funds, establishing bank accounts, and commencing employment with a company or business.

The My Number Card, featuring your photo and personal ID number, serves as a valid document for verifying your identity. Additionally, it can be employed as official identification when necessary.

Moreover, by using your My Number Card, you can conveniently obtain a "certificate of residence" or "municipal tax-related certificate" at a nearby convenience store's multi-copy machine, typically at a cost 100 yen less than at the City Hall counter. To use it at the convenience store, you will need to input your My Number Card and a four-digit PIN. Please safeguard this PIN to avoid losing it.

Furthermore, your My Number Card can function as a health insurance card at medical institutions and pharmacies equipped with card readers featuring facial recognition technology. To enable this feature, you must apply for its use through "Mynaportal" using a smartphone or other compatible device. Alternatively, you can apply at a Seven Bank ATM, where a four-digit PIN will also be required. Starting from the fall of 2024, the health insurance card and the My Number Card will be integrated into a single card.

Please be mindful that if you possess a My Number Card and there are changes in your name, address, etc., you must promptly visit the city office within 14 days to complete the necessary updates. Additionally, the expiration date of your My Number Card coincides with your period of stay. If you renew your period of stay, please remember to renew your My Number Card at the city office counter before its expiration. In the unfortunate event of losing your My Number Card, report it immediately to both the police and the city office.

## 3 Volunteer Activities for Tochigi Citizens

Since 1980, the Uzuma River in Tochigi City has undergone three annual cleaning sessions in April, July, and September. This community effort involves 25 neighborhood associations along the Uzuma River, responding to the call of three local groups, including the Tochigi City River Patronage Association. Uzuma River holds a special place in the hearts of many citizens, making its cleanliness a top priority, as it serves as a peaceful and cherished locale for both residents and tourists.

On Saturday, September 30, from 7:00 to 8:00 a.m., the "Uzumagawa Simultaneous Cleanup" will take place, spanning from the Kanita Bridge in Daicho to the Shinbashi Bridge in Kawai-cho. Foreign residents are warmly invited to participate; simply reach out to the Tochigi International Association for details on the cleanup site and logistics.

Additionally, on Saturday, September 9, there will be an "Invasive Plant Removal" at Watarase Yusuichi. No prior registration is necessary, except for groups of 10 or more participants. This event is held rain or shine and kicks off at 7:30 a.m., concluding around 9:00 a.m. The "Invasive Plant Removal" is a collaborative effort involving numerous groups and volunteers dedicated to eliminating the invasive plant, "Japanese knotweed," which detrimentally impacts the growth of native flora, to preserve the wetland environment of Watarase Yusui, a Ramsar Convention-designated wetland.

When joining these activities, please come prepared with a beverage, long sleeves, long pants, boots, a towel, eye protection, and sturdy gloves. Please consider contributing to the preservation of our natural environment and beautiful town.