

1. Evaluate your earthquake preparedness

On August 8, a 7.1 magnitude earthquake, just under 6 on the Japanese seismic scale, was recorded in Miyazaki Prefecture, and the Japan Meteorological Agency issued a temporary warning that the possibility of a major earthquake caused by a Nankai Trough was higher than usual, and urged caution against a major earthquake.

The Nankai Trough is a trench-like landform where an ocean plate is subducted beneath a land plate on the side of the Japanese archipelago under the sea floor between Shizuoka and Miyazaki prefectures, and it is believed that a major earthquake will occur when the boundary between these plates shifts.

The Nankai Trough has repeatedly produced giant earthquakes of magnitude 8 at intervals of 100 to 150 years.

The government's Seismological Research Commission predicts that there is a 70% to 80% chance that a magnitude 8 to 9 mega-earthquake will occur within the next 30 years.

The Nankai Trough earthquake could cause strong tremors of about magnitude 6 and tsunamis of 3 meters or higher in the Kanto and Okinawa regions.

In Tochigi Prefecture, it is considered unlikely that major damage will occur, but we should still reevaluate our daily earthquake preparedness.

Daily preparations include securing furniture, checking evacuation locations and routes, stockpiling water and other supplies, and confirming how to communicate with family members in case of a disaster.

Earthquakes are not limited to the Nankai Trough; you never know when or where they will strike. Living in Japan, we need to be prepared for earthquakes and think about them regularly so that we can act decisively and calmly when an emergency occurs.

2. Adjustment Benefit Payment Information

As part of the support for high prices under the Comprehensive Economic Measures to End Deflation, a "flat tax reduction" of 40,000 yen per taxpayer comprised of 30,000 yen from income tax and 10,000 yen from individual resident tax for 2024 will be provided. This also applies to spouses or dependents of the same household.

In this case, those who are not expected to receive the full amount of the lump-sum tax reduction will receive an "adjustment benefit" calculated by rounding up the amount of the tax reduction to the nearest 10,000 yen.

As of January 1, 2024, those who reside in Tochigi City, pay at least one of income tax and individual resident tax, and are expected to receive the amount of tax reduction that cannot be fully reduced by the benefit amount will be eligible for the benefit.

The Tochigi City Hall has mailed a "Confirmation of Adjustment Benefit Payment" to those who are eligible, which should be received around the beginning of August.

To receive the benefit, you must respond to the letter. Once you receive the Confirmation of Payment, please review the contents of the form, complete the required information, and return it in the self-addressed envelope with a copy of your personal identification.

The enrollment period is until October 31, 2024.

If you believe you are eligible but have not received a confirmation letter, please contact the Tochigi City Temporary Benefits Call Center at 0282-25-5211.

Please provide your name and date of birth. You must have paid taxes to receive the benefit.

3. About Uzuma River Andon Festival

The 11th Uzuma River Andon Festival will be held to add fantastic colors to the summer nights along the Uzuma River, the symbol of Tochigi City, which runs through the center of town.

From Kaiunbashi Bridge to Uzuma Park, 123 paper lanterns decorated with paper cutouts of warehouses and floats created by Kawashima Gashu, a Tochigi paper cutter, will be set up to brighten the summer evening.

The lanterns will be lit from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. until September 30, so why not take a leisurely stroll along the riverside illuminated by the lanterns?

Please note that the lanterns are located along the road, so please be aware of traffic.