

MURORAN TIMES



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Muroran City Office 1-2 Saiwai-cho, Muroran,
Hokkaido 051-8511 JAPAN <0143-22-1111>

News and Topics

A Test Run at Hokkaido Facility of JESCO

JESCO (Japan Environmental Safety Corporation) is a company that treats PCB (polychlorinated biphenyl) wastes. The Hokkaido Facility, is located on the premises of Nippon Steel Corporation in Naka-machi, Muroran. Prior to real operation in April 2008, the facility started a trial operation on January 7th.

On January 7th, under a tense atmosphere, high-voltage transformers and capacitors were transported as PCB wastes from companies in Muroran into the plant. On the way to the plant, the vehicles loaded with PCB wastes were monitored by GPS (Global Positioning System) just as in a real operation. By March the facility is going to accept 245 items of PCB wastes (transformers, capacitors and others). In the treatment process, PCB oil is extracted, the parts are disassembled and then PCB is separated. During the trial run, the facility will treat PCB wastes several times to check all the measures. On top of that, the efficiency of the exhaust treatment, and the noise and working environment will be checked. After that, the plant will operate in full-scale in April.



The Hokkaido Facility

JESCO has five facilities nationwide. The Muroran Facility will treat PCB wastes stored in Hokkaido and fifteen other prefectures (Ishikawa, Toyama, Gunma, Tochigi, Aomori, Iwate, Miyagi, Yamagata, Akita, Fukushima, Niigata, Yamanashi, Fukui, Ibaraki and Nagano) in ten years.

PCB廃棄物を無害にするための処理が4月から室蘭
で開始されるため、現在、その準備が進められてい
ます。北海道と東北など15県の分を10年かけて
処理します。

Co-op Sapporo to Open Store in Muroran

A cooperative association named “Co-op Sapporo” (main office in Sapporo) held a board of directors meeting on January 12th in Sapporo. They officially decided to open a new store in Muroran. The shop is going to open in November this year.

According to the plan, its location is the vacant lot where a transportation company used to be in Kotobuki-cho, Muroran. The area of the lot is about 11,000 m² (total store area: 3,300 m² and sales area: 2,145 m²). The shop will have a parking lot large enough for 400 cars. A yearly income of around two billion yen and the employment of 100 people are expected. However, the Muroran Chamber of Commerce hopes that Co-op Sapporo will reconsider the plan, because another big shopping center like this could be a heavy blow to local shops. Therefore Co-op Sapporo is going to have a talk about the scale of its operations with local people.

生活協同組合「コープさっぽろ」が11月に室蘭市
寿町に出店することが決定しました。年商
20億円の予定で約100人の雇用が期待されていま
す。

Muroran Curry Ramen at Lawson

One of convenience stores chains, Lawson has begun selling *Muroran-style Curry Ramen* at about 500 contracting stores in Hokkaido since January 15th. All you need to do to eat it is to just warm up the curry ramen in a microwave oven.

Lawson researched the taste of Muroran curry ramen by going around to every ramen shop in Muroran, and finally developed the *Muroran-style Curry Ramen* as one of the products of their stores.

The soup is thick and spicy, and tastes as close to the original Muroran curry ramen as possible.

The price is 480yen per package.

コンビニエンスストアのローソンでは、1月15日か
ら北海道内の店で「室蘭風カレーラーメン」を販売し
ています。1ヶ 480円です。

Five Passenger Boats Enter Muroran

According to the Port Department of Muroran City Office, five passenger boats both domestic and from overseas are scheduled to enter Muroran Port this year.

They are CLIPPER ODYSSEY (5,218t) on June 8th, PACIFIC VENUS (26,518t) on July 28th, DIAMOND PRINCESS (111,600t) on September 28th, and ASUKA II (50,142t) on September 3rd and October 15th.

Among these, the biggest luxury boat DIAMOND PRINCESS will make its second visit to Muroran, following the previous one in 2005.



むろらんしこうわんぶ 室蘭市港湾部によると、ことし室蘭港に入港予定の
きやくせん 客船は日本と外国を合わせて5隻の予定です。

Information and Invitations

Craft Exhibition by Workmen

[Date] February 13(Wed)~18(Mon) 10:00a.m. ~

[Place] *Marui-imai* Department Store

[Information] Mr. *Osawa* (Tel: 0143-22-4844)

Free Lecture for disaster prevention

[Date] February 15(Fri) 10:30a.m. ~12:00noon.

[Place] Social Welfare Council (2-2-11 *Hon-cho*.)

[Lecturer] Mr. *Hiroaki Kuwahara* (In charge of Disaster prevention safety in the Administration Section at Muroran City Office)

[Application] On that day

[More Information] Muroran Association of volunteer advisers (Tel: 0143-22-1858)

"Lifestyle and Culture of a Foreign Country" Lecture

[Date] February 16(Sat) 2:00p.m. ~ 3:00p.m.

[Place] International Community Center (*Higashi-machi* Service Center 2F)

[Admission Fee] Free

[Contents] Ms. *Shihoko Kuroda* will speak about her experience in Honduras, Central America as a Japan Peace Corps Volunteer.

[Application] by telephone at February 14

[More Information] International Relations Section at Muroran City Office (Tel: 0143-43-9092)

The Internet Safety Class

[Date] February 16 (Sat) 2:00p.m ~ 4:30p.m.

[Place] Muroran Citizen's Hall (*Wanishi Shimin-Kaikan*)

[Fee] free

[Limit] first 100 people

[Application] Please send fax or E-mail with your name, address, age, occupation and write "The Internet Safety Class" (E-mail) toriyama@kuru2.net Fax: 0143-23-2101

[Information] Mr. *Toriyama* (090-8169-2514)

Danpara Winter Muroran Festival Pre-festival activities

[Date] February 16(Sat) 7:00p.m. ~
[Place] Danpara Ski Ground
[Contents] 7:00p.m. ~ Flambeau downhill
[Limit] first 100 people
[Application] by telephone at February 14
7:00p.m. Concert by *Hokushin Midorigaoka* chorus
6:30p.m. Park rally that includes ski and snowboard
jumping competition
[More Information] Lodge Danpara (Tel:
0143-43-5600)

Danpara Winter Muroran Festival

[Date] February 17(Sun)
[Place] Danpara Ski Ground
[Admission Fee] free
[Contents] Snowboard Lesson [Conditions] over the
third grade of elementary school
[Limit] first 50 people
[Application] by telephone at February 15
10:00a.m. ~ Opening Ceremony, "Happy-ran"
Physical exercise and Scattering *Mochi*(rice cake)
on the snow 11:00a.m. ~ 2:00p.m. Roasted deer
meat and deer soup 11:30a.m. ~ 2:00p.m. Trial
snowmobile rides 0:30p.m. Large *Janken* rally
[More Information] Lodge Danpara (Tel:
0143-43-5600)



Yoga School

[Date] February 28, March 6 and 13(Every week
Thursday, 3 times /course) 6:00p.m. - 9:30p.m.
[Place] Women's Center (*Sakae-cho*)
[Lecturer] Ms. *Kieko Yamaguchi* (Vice-president of
the Hokkaido Chapter of the Japan Association of
International, Integrated Yoga)
[Limit] 20 people (if applicants exceed limit,
application will be determined by lot)
[Admission Fee] free
[Application] by telephone at February 20
[Information] Women's Center (Tel: 0143-25-3200)

Winter Festival in KARURUSU Hot Springs

Let's go to the hot springs at KARURUSU after
enjoying many games
[Date] March 2(Sun)
[Place] Noboribetsu *SANRAIBA* skiing area

[Contents] 10:00a.m. ~ looking for oranges in the
snow 10:30a.m. ~ Parent-and-child bobsled
competition (Limit: first 50 pairs, Registration begins
from 9:45 a.m.) 2:00p.m. ~ Scattering *Mochi*(rice
cake) on the snow, etc.
[More Information] Noboribetsu Sightseeing
Association (Tel: 0143-84-3311)

Japanese Cooking 195



Tofu Hot Pot 湯豆腐

- Ingredients (serve four) -

Kinugoshi-dofu (smooth tofu) 2 packs

Sauce

water	8 cups
<i>konbu</i> (kelp)	20 cm
pinchi of salt	

Dipping sauce (*tukedare*)

broth (<i>konbu dashi</i> stock)	1 cup (200cc)
soy sauce	4 tablespoons
<i>katsuo-bushi</i> (bonito flakes)	to taste

Condiments

chopped leeks	to taste	4
<i>shichimi togarashi</i>	to taste	
<i>yuzu</i> peel	to taste	

Directions

- (1) Put *konbu* and water in a pot, and leave for
about 20 minutes.
Place over high heat, and when it comes to the
boil, turn off the heat.
(Don't remove *konbu*.)
- (2) Make the *tsukedare*; Set aside 1cup *dashi* stock
from (1), add the soy sauce and *katsuo-bushi*.
Pour into a cup, and place in the center of the
pot.
- (3) Add salt to the pot over high heat, add bite- sized
pieces of tofu, and then reduce heat to low and
keep warm.
- (4) Dip the tofu in (2), and eat with individual
condiments.

1. 鍋に水と昆布を入れ、約20分おいて強火にかけ、

沸騰したら火を止める。(昆布は入れたまま)

2. (1)を1カップ取り分け、しょうゆとかつお節を加えて

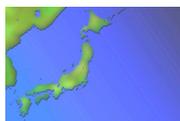
つけだれ^{つく うつわ い なべ ちゅうおう}を作り、器^{うつわ}に入れて鍋^{なべ}の中央^{ちゅうおう}に置く。

3. 鍋^{なべ}に塩^{しお}を加えて強火^{くわ}にし、人数分^{にんずうぶん}に切った豆腐^{き とうふ}を入^い

れ、煮立^{に た}ったら弱火^{よわび}にして温^{あたた}める。

4. 各自^{かくじ}、豆腐^{とうふ}を(2)の「たれ」と薬味^{やくみ}につけて食^たべる。

About Japan



Government and Economy

<How is the local government of Japan conducted?>

The Constitution of Japan guarantees local autonomy. Governors, ward chiefs, city mayors, village mayors and members of their assemblies are directly elected by residents.

However, the municipalities are heavily dependent on the state, because their major job is business entrusted by the state, and public works in those municipalities cannot be implemented without financial assistance from the state. It is said that, on average, 70% of the financial resources of local governments comes from subsidies from the central government.

Out of a need to expand the authority of local governments, the central government proposed several changes to revise local governments in 2003.

Reforms included reducing subsidies from the central government and revising the tax allocation system for local governments, and also moving the tax source to the local areas. By implementing these three changes, the central government intends to form the infrastructure leading to independent action by local governments.

<Taxes in Japan: What kind of taxes do the Japanese pay?>

Taxes in Japan are classified into two categories: direct taxes imposed on one's income, and indirect taxes imposed on one's consumption and expenditures.

Direct taxes include income tax, corporation tax, inheritance tax, and donation tax. Besides national taxes, local taxes are also imposed.

The 5% consumption tax is representative of indirect taxes which are levied on all goods. Purchasers pay the tax to merchants, and then it is

the merchants' responsibility to pay the collected tax to the state.

Direct taxes account for 67% of the 2003 tax revenues of Japan, whereas indirect taxes account for 33%. In comparison with other countries, the ratio of direct taxes is higher in Japan and the United States; indirect taxes account for more than 50% in the United Kingdom, Germany and France.

It is feared that maintaining the social security system for the aging society in the 21st century will be impossible without raising the consumption tax.

<Are taxes in Japan high by world standards?>

The tax burden ratio to the national income of Japan in 2003 was 20.9% with the national taxes and local taxes combined. The amount was 76.5 trillion yen. The tax burden ratio in 1994 was 23.2%, and so there has been a gradual decrease.

The United Kingdom, at 41.4%, is one of the countries with the highest tax burden ratio. In France and Germany the ratio is 39.8% and 31.2% respectively. European countries generally have higher tax burden ratios than Japan, but the majority of their taxes are indirect.

If one has the impression that Japanese taxes are very high, that is because the direct taxes, or visible taxes, from one's income are quite high.

Cinema Guide

Muroran Gekijo (Higashi-machi) TEL: 0143-41-4232

1. The BOURNE ULTIMATUM

2. SWEENEY TODD –THE DEMON
BARBER OF FLEET STREET-

3. かげひなた^{かげひなた}に咲^さく (Japanese)

4. Request Series

(HAIRSPRAY, PAN'S LABYRINTH, etc)



About the Muroran Times

The Muroran Times is designed to bring information about local events to the international community of Muroran. Staff: Mitani Yoichi, Ishizawa Yuko, Yamashita Mayumi, Tagashira Kazui, Nomura Ikuko, Nakamura Mari, English advisor: Jane Takizawa.