

# 42 MW GEOTHERMAL PLANT PLANNED FOR NORTHERN JAPAN

A 42 MW geothermal power station is being planned by Electric Power Development Co. for a site in northern Japan's Akita prefecture. It should be **operational** by May 2019.



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Financing for about \$221 million will come from a number of banks and 80% is guaranteed by Japan Oil, Gas & Metals National Corporation.

A 42 MW geothermal project is a big one – the last geothermal installation created in Japan over 10 MW was in 1996. Japan’s deepest lake – Lake Tazawa – is located in Akita and there are natural hot springs in the hills above it. Akita is also home to a hot spring that has the highest flow rate in Japan: Tamagawa Hot Spring.

Several years ago, it was reported that Japan has about 20 GW of geothermal **potential**. According to a different source, Japan has only **developed** about 2% of its geothermal potential for energy production.

One barrier is that some geothermal sites are located in parks where development is prohibited. However, after the Fukushima disaster there obviously was much greater interest in clean, renewable forms of energy because they are much safer.

Although Fukushima was clearly a disaster, it does seem to have spurred greater interest in and commitment to clean energy source development. Japan could definitely continue to carefully grow its geothermal potential to replace more dangerous forms of energy.

**Iceland** gets about 30% of its electricity from geothermal. Japan might not reach that level, but any increase would be welcome. Solar and wind get most of the renewable energy press, and they should probably, but geothermal is not a trivial potential source of renewable energy, and should not be overlooked.

42 MW might not sound like a lot, but building the new plant could set a precedent for developing a number of geothermal power plants of a similar size.

About one million people live in Akita prefecture, an area where the main industries are fishing, forestry, and agriculture. Rice farming and sake brewing are two of the main agricultural pursuits.

Source: <http://cleantechnica.com/2015/02/13/42-mw-geothermal-plant-planned-northern-japan/>