

Swiss nuclear scare prompts medical handout

No scare has occurred unless handing out the tablets caused one.

IOL, Zambia
October 29, 2004

Bern – Over one million people living near nuclear power stations in Switzerland will receive new potassium iodide tablets to guard against radioactive contamination after a nuclear accident, Swiss authorities said on Friday.

The fresh batch will be sent to people living within 20km of the country's five nuclear power stations, instead of the previous five kilometre radius, the national drugs agency Swissmedic said.

Local residents will also receive two of the six-tablet boxes instead of one to allow them to help out family, friends and passers-by in an emergency.

About 90 000 companies, hospitals and public offices in the area will also receive free stocks over the next two months.

Potassium iodide helps to stop the thyroid gland from absorbing radioactive iodine fallout.