



HELLO OKAYA

OKAYA INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGE ASSOCIATION

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Spring Issue April 15, 2007

This newsletter is distributed four times a year by the Okaya International Exchange Association, in order to provide local foreign residents with information necessary for daily life, as well as giving some insight into aspects of Japanese culture.

ALIEN REGISTRATION

Gaikokujin Toroku

When foreign citizens decide to stay in Japan, it is necessary for them to take care of a number of procedures at the municipal office in the city, town or village where they reside, the most important of which is Alien Registration.

If you intend to stay for less than 90 days, you do not need to worry about completing Alien Registration, however, if you plan to stay for longer than this period, you must register at the municipal office within 90 days of entry in to Japan. This is the equivalent of Resident Registration (*Jumin Toroku*) in which all Japanese citizens must complete. Alien Registration is a very simple procedure and can be completed at the Citizen's Affairs Division located on the 1st Floor of Okaya City Hall.

If you are over 16 years of age, you are required to register in person. You will need to take along two passport photos, measuring 4.5cm in height and 3.5cm in width, taken within the last six months. In the case of children under 16 years old, a proxy over 16 years and who is of the same family (a person who lives with you but who is not of the same family may not act as a proxy) may apply in his or her place. No photographs are needed for children under 16 years of age. For those who intend to stay for over one year, please come prepared with the names, addresses and nationalities of your mother, father or spouse.

Once you have completed Alien Registration it will take about three weeks for your Alien Registration Card to be issued. For those people over 16 years of age, your alien registration card must be carried with you at all times as a form of identification, so make sure you keep it safely. If there is a change to any of the particulars on your card,

for example, you have changed jobs, you have newly moved in to Okaya City or have moved to a new address within Okaya, you are required to report these changes to the Citizens Affairs Division



Alien Registration Card

within 14 days. If you move away from Okaya City to another municipality, you are required to register at the municipal office in your new place of residence. Of course be sure to take your Alien Registration Card with you. There is no need to notify the Okaya City Hall of your move.

When registering changes, it is permissible for a family member living at the same address to register these changes of your behalf. However, if your card has expired or you need your card reissued, you must report to the municipal office in person.

While living in Japan, it is sometimes necessary to submit an official document verifying your address and other particulars. Examples of such cases include entry to school, employment, changing the name on a motor vehicle etc. If you should need such a document, please apply for Proof of Foreign Resident Registration Information '*Gaikokujintoroku Genpyo Kisai Jiko Shomeisho*' at the Citizen's Affairs Division with your Alien Registration Card. You can do this in person, or have a relative who is living with you do it. If you would like to have someone else apply on your behalf, you will need to submit a power of attorney. Certificates are issued at a cost of 300 yen per copy. When applying, you will need to fill in the reason for application as well as where you will submit the document.

JAPANESE SPRING TRADITIONS ~ One Point Japanese Culture ~

Flower Viewing (Hanami)



Hanami is going out to enjoy viewing flowers such as cherry blossoms and is a time in which people enjoy the coming of spring. In most cases, *Hanami* refers to people drinking and eating under the cherry blossom trees in full bloom. Cherry blossoms are found all around Japan, with trees coming into flower all at once in a given area. As the flowers only last about a week before the petals start to fall off, they leave a lasting impression year after year, and to the Japanese are an important flower associated with spring. Due to the shortness of the blossoming period and the beauty of the flowers themselves, they are often likened to the evanescence of life. *Sake* drunk while viewing the flowers is known as '*Hanamizake*,' and is regarded as a sign of refinement.

School Entrance

(*Nyugaku*)

'Nyugaku' means to enter school. To enter kindergarten (*yochien*) is known as '*nyuen*' and to enter elementary school is often referred to as '*shuugaku*.' All Japanese children who are under six years old on April 1st, must undergo a medical check-up, and if no abnormalities are found to be present, they are deemed fit to enter school. Of course children of foreign nationality are also able to enter school in Japan. As this medical check-up is part of the compulsory education system, it is required that all healthy children of school age enter a regular elementary school. The opposite of '*nyuugaku*' is '*sotsugyo*,' or graduation. School entrance and graduation are traditionally spring events, however, in many western countries these ceremonies take place in the fall.



Boys' Festival

(*Tango no Sekku*)

'Tango no Sekku,' or Boys' Day falls on May 5th, and is a traditional festival for celebrating boys growing up. *Tango* is designated as the boys' festival, with families traditionally celebrating the day by decorating their homes with armor, helmets, swords and warrior dolls, and flying carp streamers outside in the garden. Helmets and armor are thought to protect the young boy's body, and the custom of flying carp, which originated in China, is done in hope that boys will succeed in life. The streamers are hung up outside in sets of three. May 5th is also a national holiday, known as Children's Day (*Kodomo no Hi*), and falls at the end of Golden Week. The first Boys' Day after a baby boy is born is a very joyous celebration.



Other Procedures

All procedures start with Alien Registration!

Once you have completed Alien Registration, you will be able to complete the following procedures. Make sure you visit the Citizen's Affairs Division today!!

You need your Alien Registration Card for the following:

- To open a bank account...
- To purchase a mobile phone...
- To enroll in national health insurance...
- To register your name seal (*inkan*)...
- To apply for child support allowance...
- To enroll your child in nursery or elementary school...
- To change your foreign driver's license to a Japanese one...



National Health Insurance (*Konmin Kenko Hoken*)

Foreign residents, who have completed Alien Registration and intend to stay for more than one year, are advised to enroll in national health insurance. Those people who are not able to do so through their workplace are eligible to enroll in national health insurance and national pension insurance at their local municipal office. While you must pay the insurance premium each month, foreign students with no income pay a reduced amount. Please enquire at the Health Promotion Division for further details.

Multilingual Trash Calendar

When you move to Okaya City and register as a foreign resident you will receive the household garbage collection calendar which shows you how to separate and recycle your household garbage. The city also provides a calendar in Portuguese, English, Chinese, Tagalog and Korean to foreign residents, which include pictures. Please make use of this calendar.



Okaya International Exchange Association

In addition to publishing this newsletter, the Okaya International Exchange Association provides a variety of services to foreign residents including translation, interpreting and help with various kinds of procedures related to life in Japan.

Translation: Sometimes it is necessary to submit your birth certificate or similar document from your home country when completing procedures here in Japan. In most cases it is necessary to submit the original along with a Japanese translation. In you need a Japanese translation, we can translate the document for you.

Interpreting: When you visit departments in City hall is highly likely that the person in charge only speaks Japanese. In order to take care of matters smoothly, one of our staff or volunteers will be happy to interpret for you.

In addition to translation and interpreting services, we are also able to help you with filling out forms or preparing documents to be submitted to such places as the Immigration Bureau or the Social Insurance Office.

Consultation: If you have any troubles or worries, please feel free to consult one of the staff at the OIEA. If we are unable to help you directly we will be more than happy to introduce you to someone who can.



We also hold Japanese classes and other events for foreign residents throughout the year. For the latest information, please contact the OIEA or look on our homepage. We hope to see you all sometime soon.

We make it our job to help you lead a comfortable life here in Okaya City. Please feel free to drop by our office any time.

Okaya City Hall 4F

Monday to Friday 8:30AM ~ 5:30PM

City Hall Service Windows

There are many different procedures you need to take care in your daily life. Once you have completed Alien Registration you will be able to receive various services as a citizen of Okaya City. Procedures provided by each department are as follows.

Procedure	Department	Floor	Ext.	Procedure	Department	Floor	Ext.
Alien Registration, Submission of Birth & Death Notification, Registration of Name Seal etc.	Citizen's Affairs Div. (<i>Shiminka</i>)	1F	1157	Long-term care Insurance	Healthcare Welfare Div. (<i>Kaigo Fukushima</i>)	2F	1281
National Health Insurance, Vaccination, Maternity Passbook	Health Promotion Div. (<i>Kenkosuishinka</i>)	1F	1181 1184 1190	Child Allowance Childbirth Allowance Special Child Allowance, Childcare Allowance Disability Allowance	Social Welfare Div. (<i>Shakai Fukushima</i>)	2F	1251 1252 1254
Local Tax (City & Prefectural Tax), Light Vehicle Tax etc.	Local Tax Div. (<i>Zeimuka</i>)	1F	1125 1126	Application for City Housing	City Planning Div. (<i>Toshikeikakuka</i>)	3F	1336 1337
Entrance to Elementary and Junior High Schools	Educational Affairs Div. (<i>Kyoikusomuka</i>)	2F	1213	All procedures relating to water and sewage	Waterworks Div. (<i>Suidoka</i>)	4F	1416 1418
Entrance to Nursery School	Child Affairs Div. (<i>Kodomoka</i>)	2F	1261				



All About Water



As water is essential in our daily lives, it is important to keep in mind how it is treated before and after we use it. Eighty percent of the water in Okaya City is drawn from a spring underground, the other twenty percent being drift water (water from the river). The only river water source in Okaya City is the Oikawa Filtration Plant, which we will use as an example in explaining the water treatment process.

(1) Water is drawn from the river and filtered

The first step in making tap water begins with drawing the water from the river. It is then treated (filtered) so that it is suitable for drinking.

Tap Water (Supply Water)

Water is delivered to homes, factories etc. by a network of pipes which run throughout the city.

(2) Use in Homes

Water is used for drinking and a number of other purposes.

Discharge into sewerage pipes

Tap water is released into the sewerage pipes once it is not needed anymore.

(3) Final Treatment Process

Water goes through numerous treatment processes until it is suitable to be discharged.

(4) Lake Suwa

The treated water is emptied in to Lake Suwa and then flows out to the sea.

Notifying the Okaya City Waterworks Division

It is necessary to notify the Waterworks Division (City Hall 4F) in the following situations. You can either contact the Waterworks Division by telephone or go in to City Hall directly, two to three days in advance.

TEL 23-4811 Ext. 1417/1418 FAX 24-0294

	Fee	Agent	Points to keep in mind
Connection of Water Supply	¥1,300	OK	You do not need to be present when water is connected, however, you are asked to ensure that all taps are turned off.
Disconnection of Water Supply	¥1,300	OK	If you move house you are asked to inform the city of your new address (contact details).
Change of Account holder	No Charge	OK	Addresses of the new and old nominal person must be provided.

To ensure there is no trouble later down the line, please ensure you notify the Waterworks Division in the above cases.

Water and Sewerage Payment

Calculated every two months: Bills are sent to consumers every two months in order to save collection costs and for ease of payment.

Water Rates · Fixed charge of 2,160 yen (In case of 13 mm diameter water meter) plus charge for volume of water used + consumption tax

Sewerage Rates · Fixed charge of 2,760 yen (up to 20m³) + charge for volume of sewerage water used + consumption tax.

If you use sewerage water you will pay an amount by adding together +

Be Prepared for Disaster



In Japanese there is the saying 'Providing is Preventing' (*Sonae areba urei nashi*). You never know when, where or what kind of disaster may happen. Here we introduce some things you should keep in mind regarding your water and sewerage supply.

Set Aside Tap Water

It is necessary to set aside about three liters of water per person per day. Fill a clean container with a lid right to the top, and store it in a cool dark place. It is best to change the water in the container once every three days or so. Of course you can use the old water for baths, laundry, or to water plants.

Secure Water Containers

If you ensure you have a water container for use in times of emergency, even if your water has been cut off, you will still be able to receive water at a water station. If you have something you can boil water in, it will be even better.

Save Your Bath Water

If you save your bath water, you will be able to use it during a disaster to flush the toilet, to put out fires and for various other purposes.

Get to Know Your Community

While it may not seem easy at times, it is important to get to know and interact with your neighbors and people in your community on a regular basis, and create a network where you can help each other in an emergency.



Water Bill Payments

You will receive a water bill once every two months, and will have the option of having the payment taken directly out of your bank account, or paying in cash. For convenience sake and to ensure your bill is paid, we recommend the automatic bank transfer.

[Account Transfer]

Payments will be taken from your designated financial institution once every two months, on the 22nd of a given month. If the 22nd falls on the holiday, payment will be taken on the next business day. Confirmation of can be made by checking your bank passbook or on the 'Notification of last payment section' of your water meter reading. Application for this type of account transfer can be made at your financial institution or at the waterworks division service counter. You will need to take along your bank passbook and your bank seal.

[Payment in Cash]

Payments can be made at your local financial institution, the Waterworks Division, or any of the city branch offices by showing your notification of payment (*Nonyu tsuchisho*) received every two months.

[Reporting Change of Name]

Any changes to the water or bank account name, as a result of moving in or out of Okaya City, or in the case of a death, must be reported.

USING THE SEWER CORRECTLY

~ Your drainpipe is not a magic hole! ~

Water containing sewage disposed of down household drainpipes, journeys through the sewer pipes before being pumped in to the water treatment plant. Carelessness can cause your pipes or pump to become blocked, cause sewerage to overflow on to the street, or prevent proper treatment at the filtration plant. Make sure you observe the following rules and use your sewer correctly.

Nine Rules for Water Use

< Rule 1 > Take care when flushing paper down the toilet

Flushing paper other than toilet paper, such as tissue paper, wet tissues, disposable diapers can cause your pipes to become blocked.



< Rule 2 > Do not flush cigarette ashes or sanitary items

Make sure you use the dust box provided inside the toilet cubicle for disposal of such items.



< Rule 3 > Instead of disposing of food scraps down the sink, be sure to collect them in the raw waste basket.

Raw food scraps can cause a bad smell or lead to the forming of hydrogen sulfide gas due to pipe corrosion. It is also a leading cause of the corrosion of concrete structures.

< Rule 4 > Do not tip household cooking (Tempura) oil down the sink.

As oil does not dissolve in water it may become stuck on your pipe walls and cause the water pipes to harden, or your pipes or home to corrode.

< Rule 5 > Be careful not to let hair go down the sink, bath or shower.

Hair does not break down and can form balls with other fibers causing the pipes to become blocked or not to work.

< Rule 6 > Do not dispose of dangerous substances (oil, gasoline, thinners etc.) down the drain!

There is a risk that these substances may cause an explosion, or harden inside your pipes and cause an oil ball. As the filtration plant does not do microbial treatment, therefore such substances add to the pollution of Lake Suwa.



< Rule 7 > Go easy on the use of detergents

These have a bad affect on the microorganisms used to clean the water.

< Rule 8 > Take care when using water outdoors

Take care so that plastics and sand do not go down the sink.



< Rule 9 > Do not use waster disposers (to dispose of raw waste)

Ground up food scraps can accumulate in your pipes, or build up in the treatment plant and cause damage to equipment.