

# “Saitama GENSAI Project”: A Project for Disaster Mitigation

## Saitama Prefecture



### Background

In order to ensure the safety and security of residents from disasters including major earthquakes that have been occurring frequently in recent years, torrential rain caused by typhoons, tornados, wind gusts, and heavy snow etc., Saitama Prefecture deliberated different ways to share disaster information among the residents to try and promote disaster prevention and disaster mitigation based community development.

The deliberations concluded that if the residents can not only receive disaster information but also transmit and share information on any disasters happening nearby, more appropriate action and disaster prevention and disaster mitigation based community development could be expected. Therefore, the Prefectural Government launched the “Saitama GENSAI Project” together with the private weather information service, WEATHERNEWS Inc. (WNI), in April 2014.

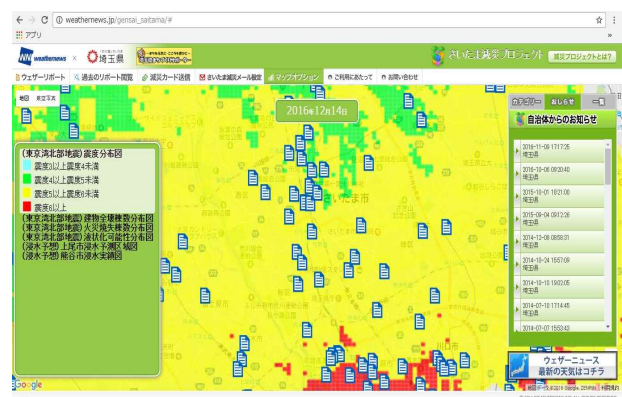
### Purpose of Project

- Sharing disaster information among residents  
If residents can not only receive information but also transmit and share information on any disasters happening nearby, it will become possible to take appropriate action for disaster prevention and disaster mitigation in the event of an emergency.
- Promotion of disaster prevention and disaster mitigation based community development  
Publication of prefectural and municipal charts related to disaster prevention as part of the “Saitama GENSAI Project” can facilitate assessment of the disaster risk in local communities while promoting disaster preparedness and disaster prevention and

disaster mitigation based community development.

(Published charts related to disaster prevention)

- Map of evacuation centres
- Outlook charts related to possible damage caused by a northern Tokyo Bay earthquake (seismic intensity map, distribution chart of completely destroyed buildings, distribution chart of burnt-down buildings, and distribution chart of potential liquefaction)
- Inland water hazard maps (for Ageo City and Kumagaya City only)



Saitama GENSAI Project screenshot (Seismic intensity map of northern Tokyo Bay earthquakes)

### Outline of Project

In the “Saitama GENSAI Project,” when a resident posts any disaster information on the website set up by WNI, anyone can then browse that information which is displayed on a map. This project is implemented through an agreement between Saitama Prefectural Government and WNI.

(Roles of the Prefectural Government)

- Publicise the “Saitama GENSAI Project” to

residents, etc.

- Promote participation in and utilisation of the “Saitama GENSAI Project” by officials of the Prefectural Government and municipalities in the prefecture

(Roles of WEATHERNEWS Inc.)

- Develop the “Saitama GENSAI Project” website
- Manage and operate the “Saitama GENSAI Project” website



Saitama GENSAI Project screenshot (posting disaster information)

## Progress and Achievements

Since this project is implemented through an agreement between the Prefectural Government and a private business, the project has been promoted without any cost burden to the Prefectural Government.

## Effects of Project

In the strong wind gusts that occurred just after the “Saitama GENSAI Project” started, the project was effective for initial information gathering. Disaster information on typhoons, torrential rain, etc. has also been transmitted by residents and shared among them.

In addition, warning announcements are made on days when residents are at the risk of heatstroke, through cooperation with the Health and Longevity Division, Saitama Prefecture, utilising the “Local Government Announcement” function.

These days, the number of website hits during normal times is about 300 a day, while during landfall of typhoon No. 9 in August 2016, the number increased to

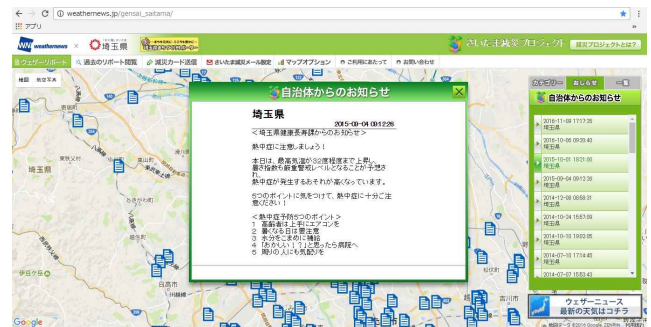
about 2,500 a day, 8 times more than normal. The website has been further utilised as a tool for sharing disaster information.

## Problems and Responses

- Satisfactory publicity for the residents

About three years have passed since the start of the “Saitama GENSAI Project” in April 2014, and the number of website hits has been decreasing. In order to share more disaster information, further publicity is required for the residents, aiming to increase the number of users.

Public relations activities are currently conducted using the prefectural public relations magazine and website, the municipal public relations magazine, FM radio, etc. To ensure widespread knowledge, publicity through a variety of media will be continued.



Saitama GENSAI Project screenshot (Local Government Announcement)

## Outlook

(Enhancement of disaster prevention charts)

The enhancement of disaster prevention charts is being considered, including increasing the number of municipalities shown on the inland water hazard map. This would allow anyone to assess the disaster risk of their local community easily, and have a positive effect on the promotion of efforts for disaster prevention and disaster mitigation.

## **Reference URL**

Saitama GENSAI Project: Saitama Prefecture's website

<http://www.pref.saitama.lg.jp/a1102/toshihukkou/gensai-project.html>

Saitama GENSAI Project: WNI's website

[http://weathernews.jp/gensai\\_saitama/](http://weathernews.jp/gensai_saitama/)

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