

# Putting Customer Safety First by Strengthening Safety Measures



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## When the Quake Struck

The station was operating normally when the quake hit. It started shaking so violently I couldn't stay upright without holding on to something. I wasn't even able to get under a table. I had never experienced anything like it before.

We sent home the part-time staff soon afterwards. The station couldn't operate due to the power outage, and a tsunami warning was issued on the radio. As the remaining employees were closing up the station, I heard one of them yell, "It's here!" I saw the breakwater disappear and the tsunami wiping out a pine forest, coming our way. I yelled, "Everybody run!" We took refuge in a five-story apartment building as the water came up to the second floor. If it had come any faster, we probably wouldn't have made it.

## The First Step Toward Reconstruction

When I went back to the service station at dawn the next day, there was nothing left—only the framework of the building. Everything else had been washed away. After being in business at this location for more than thirty years, I was at a loss. Despite it all, some customers urged me to reopen. In May, we set up a generator amongst the rubble to run one fuel pump, and started providing gas for the interim.

The reconstruction work began on February 1, 2012, and the station was completely rebuilt in two months. Of course, measures were taken to prepare for any future earthquakes and tsunamis. We have a generator, a waterproof fuel pump, and a portable, emergency fuel pump which refuels directly from the underground tank on power from a car battery. A satellite phone and an evacuation ladder to the roof of the building have also been installed.



◀ With staff (Katsushika second from left)



Disaster preparedness equipment:  
Satellite phone ▲  
Generator ▶  
Waterproof fuel pump ▶  
Evacuation ladder to the rooftop (left to right) ▶





The Ishinomaki Higashi Service Station was forced to halt operations due to the Great East Japan Earthquake on March 11, 2011. The service station was fully reopened on April 20, 2012, after reinforcing safety measures based on lessons from the quake. With the aim of ensuring zero accidents, all Cosmo Group frontline employees maintain high safety awareness and the Group has introduced accident prevention technologies and systems.

### ● Valuing Ties with Local Customers

The Ishinomaki Higashi Service Station is next to a residential area and has close ties to the community. We have many warm-hearted, long-term customers and some come from far away. Although the fuel pumps are self-service, we wash customer's cars by hand, just like the good old days. We love it whenever a customer strikes up a friendly conversation.

As a community-based service station, we intend to maintain our strong ties with customers and make ourselves indispensable to the area. By learning from the experience of the earthquake, we aim to be a safe service station without any accidents, always prepared for a disaster. I believe this is my role, and this is what motivates me every day.



## Making Every Effort to Support Service Station Operations

### Reconstruction Timeline for the Ishinomaki Higashi Service Station

**2011**

- March 11 Great East Japan Earthquake

**Damage situation**

Canopy	Partly damaged
Building	Debris inside
Fuel pumps	All destroyed
Car wash and fire containment fence	Washed away
Sign pole	Wiring damage
Concrete slab	Broken up

- May 28 Start of interim operations

**2012**

- February 1 Start of reconstruction

**Introduction of Disaster Preparedness Equipment**

Flood-resistant multi-fuel pump	Can dispense fuel even after being temporarily submerged in a flood (1 pump)
Emergency fuel pump	Can dispense fuel directly above the underground tank during a power outage
Generator	Enables operation during an power outage
Evacuation ladder	Allows evacuation to the office rooftop during flooding
LED sign	Reduces maintenance costs and environmental impact due to low power consumption and long life
LED lighting	

- April 20 Full restoration

Photo shows current Ishinomaki Higashi Service Station

### Aiming for Even Better Results

As a sales representative, I have been working to support service stations' efforts to improve their operations for three years. The Ishinomaki Higashi Service Station is very important to Cosmo Oil due to its excellent sales and operations. The station is such an integral part of the community that local customers urged it to reopen soon after the disaster. This is mainly due to the

personality of the station manager, Ryoichi Katsushika. He has also earned a lot of trust from employees.

We received the request to reopen the station only a month after the earthquake. We wanted to move faster, but full-scale reconstruction could not start until

February 2012 due to delays in the overall recovery effort and a shortage of personnel. I think the period of interim operations was the most difficult. My goal is to assist the station to achieve even higher sales than before the earthquake.

