

Locating North Korea's nuclear test site

North Korea's warning that it will test a nuclear weapon has left experts wondering where such a demonstration could be conducted. While an atmospheric explosion would shed radioactive fallout over its territory, an underground test would pollute the peninsula's shallow water table

SUSPECTED TEST SITES



UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR TESTING

Location of test site based on

1. Proximity to inhabited areas
2. Groundwater and aquifers
3. Geology – rock type and structure
4. Drill depth required for placement

Vertical borehole: 1-3m diameter – needs specialised drilling equipment supported by reinforced platform at surface. Backfilled to prevent radioactive leakage

Instrumentation buildings: At least 2km from **Ground Zero**. Cables to diagnostic canister in borehole to measure bomb yield and radioactivity

Chimney:

When explosion subsides, column of rock collapses leaving crater at surface

Cavity: Vaporised rock leaves hole, size dependent on yield – e.g. 12m radius from 1 kiloton bomb

Horizontal mineshaft:

For “weapon’s effects tests”, e.g radiation and thermal tests

