

April 17, 2001  
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APR 23 2001

Dear Larry:

Thank you for your letter of April 6, requesting input into the EEOICR. I hope I may be able to provide some insight from the worker viewpoint.

The requests for probability and causation of work related cancers have been addressed by RECA in the past, and would serve as a useful tool in determining rad-induced cancers in DOE contractor workers. The DOE/ES&H Recycled Uranium Legacy website at <http://tis.ch.doe.gov/legacy> has a vast amount of information relating to exposure pathways. Some of the site's information is included in this package. I am also including a personal letter of 8-5-99, which was distributed to a number of DOE, legislative, and press contacts. It expresses my own concerns of incomplete information. This is a very important issue, as reports from NEC, public meetings, legislators, press, and DOE itself, admit that records were often inaccurate, incomplete, or non-existent. This is perhaps the biggest challenge facing confirmation. While there should not be a 'blank check' for everyone who ever drove by a DOE facility, the benefit of the doubt ("as likely as not") should be given the workers who faced these toxins on a near-daily basis. As Dr. Seligman told me about a year ago, it would be better served to allow an ineligible claim, than to overlook just one ill worker who truly deserved and needed assistance. Hopefully, a truly fair and equitable system can be derived.

I feel the Special Exposure Cohort Group must be expanded. This seems only reasonable, as it would be grossly unfair to exclude a majority of potentially eligible ill workers, or relegate them to a lesser form of coverage. The copy of the EEOICP which I have lists a cutoff date of February 1, 1992 for the SEG. I believe this date should be removed, as there have been exposures since this date, and continue today. Rocky Flats, INEEL, and Oak Ridge, and possibly others, have had recent rad and toxic exposures. These should be given the same consideration for coverage, should health problems develop in the future.

Most of the questions of records (or lack of the same), dose reconstruction, incomplete monitoring, and ongoing contamination, are a matter of record in the DOE public hearing records, the Thompson Senate Hearings of March 2000, NEC reports, news reports from sources such as CNN, Dateline, USA Today, the Toledo Blade's "Deadly Alliance" series, and others. I would be glad to pull together any of the foregoing in my possession which you feel would be of value. My hope is that the benefit of the doubt will be given the workers, who continue to suffer, many at great loss, because of past, and sometimes continuing, practices.

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8-5-99

Naivete. Another nickel word that can get you killed or ruin one's life. Much has been said recently about what was known, or should have been known, about the dangers and potential exposures at Oak Ridge's Department of Energy plants. There is still the deep division between the ill workers who feel at least part of their ailments are site-related, and those who insist there is nothing wrong, or that the dangers were communicated well enough for employees to make an informed choice in accepting or continuing employment. As a 30-year Y-12 veteran with a documented workplace-induced illness, I can attest to the fact that the workers often were unaware of the potential severity of the dangers they faced. Radiation was, and is, a huge concern. The almost daily chip fires from depleted uranium in the machine shops probably posed the same problems now linked to the DU ammunition used in Iraq and the Balkans, and alleged to be a major contributor to Gulf War Syndrome. Many chemicals, such as trichlorethyne and freon are no longer used due to their toxicity. Yet we worked with these and other hazards unaware, for years. Add in thorium, lead, mercury, and a host of unknowns (we worked, after all, on a "need to know" basis), and there is a virtual synergistic soup of toxic possibilities.

It's true that we humans die from a number of causes which have nothing to do with DOE sites. However, others do suffer from their exposures, both at Oak Ridge and most other sites. I still do not understand why I contracted Chronic Beryllium Disease, while co-workers, often working within a few feet of me, failed to do so. But to brush aside those of us unlucky enough to fall victim to the workplace hazards is unconscientious. Recently declassified documents reveal a number of hazards we workers came into daily contact with, without any knowledge of the fact.

Downplaying the hazards is much like saying that, since I have never had a heart attack, or been involved in a shooting or serious auto accident, then they must not be a problem. When the problems become real and personal, as it has with me, attitudes change. We did NOT always know the hazards we faced at the nuclear weapons plants. It is true that most situations cannot be made one hundred per cent safe, but minimizing the hazards has cost many of us our quality of life, which is as important as life and longevity itself. Foregoing that six pack and carton of cigarettes may lessen the chance of a potential auto accident, but a well-informed workforce, from the top down, would be an ideal to prevent illnesses such as mine, and the other eighty-plus beryllium-disease victims at Oak Ridge Operations. Positive strides have been made recently in this area, but for some of us, it's simply too late. Too many were too naïve for too long. We must do better for the future.

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## Office of Environment, Safety and Health Recycled Uranium Legacy

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
March 29, 2001

**NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:**  
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### **Energy Department Releases Historical Studies of Recycled Uranium**

#### *Differing Operational Practices Result in Data Inconsistencies Among Studies*

The Department of Energy (DOE) today released nine site-specific studies that examined the historical movement of recycled uranium throughout the Department's complex. The studies represent the fifth installment of a comprehensive effort begun by the department in September 1999 to address worker concerns associated with the historical use of recycled uranium at the Gaseous Diffusion Plants in Paducah, Kentucky, Portsmouth, Ohio, and Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

The nine reports cover the following 12 sites: Hanford, Wash.; Savannah River, S.C.; Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory, Idaho; Fernald, Ohio; (including West Valley, N.Y.; Weldon Springs, Mo.; and RMI Inc. Ohio); the Gaseous Diffusion Plants in Paducah, Ky.; Portsmouth, Ohio; Oak Ridge, Tenn.; the Y-12 Plant, Tenn.; and Rocky Flats, Colo.

The reports, as well as a project overview that describes the approach used to prepare the reports, are available on the web at <http://tis.eh.doe.gov/legacy/>. The reports provide a general understanding of the flow and characteristics of recycled uranium at individual sites. They identify where recycled uranium and trace amounts of other radioactive contaminants could have concentrated or been released, including historical periods, activities and concentrations, which may be useful for identifying potential worker exposure.

Thousands of historical records were retrieved and analyzed to compile the data used in these studies. Based on this information, DOE has a good preliminary understanding of the characteristics and trace contaminants in the major streams of recycled uranium.

However, because of differing operational practices, different designations for recycled uranium used by the sites in historical records dating back to 1952, and the extensive blending operations used by the sites, there are data inconsistencies among the reports. Because of these inconsistencies, the numeric totals of the sites cannot be calculated to yield an accurate accounting of the amount of recycled uranium across the DOE complex.

To resolve these inconsistencies, and build on historical records, the Department's Office of Plutonium, Uranium, and Special Materials Inventory has been charged with

conducting a follow-on study to develop a historical mass balance for uranium -- including recycled uranium. The nine recycled uranium reports will be used in the study.

A brief press conference call will be held today at 3 p.m. for interested media who would like more specific information on the recycled uranium project. Please call (202) 586-5806 to receive the call-in number and to confirm your participation by noon today.

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