DOE Construction Workers At Risk for Certain Cancers

Workers who repaired, maintained or built buildings at DOE’s Amchitka, Hanford, Oak Ridge, and Savannah River sites are at an elevated risk for developing cancer, according to a new report recently released by members of the BTMed Program.

The study, published in the September issue of the American Journal of Industrial Medicine, drew on data collected in the BTMed Program at those four sites. Researchers looked at health screening data on 8,976 workers who had an initial BTMed screening interview between 1998 and 2004. These workers were cross-referenced using the National Death Index to ascertain vital status and causes of death.

About 31% of the construction workers in the study had worked at Hanford. Of the 266 Hanford workers who passed away, 94 had died of cancer. That is 14 more cancer deaths than would be expected in the general U.S. population. The most significant finding at Hanford was a very high rate of mesothelioma, a cancer of the protective lining that covers most of the body’s internal organs. It is almost always caused by exposure to asbestos.

The study reported a total of 674 deaths from all causes among the group, slightly less than expected. But the death rate was significantly higher among those identified as asbestos workers and insulators. The incident of cancer was elevated at all four sites with the highest rates at Savannah River.

Although the cancer deaths were notable, the deaths from asbestosis were 30 times that of the general population. Asbestosis is a noncancerous lung disease caused by inhaling asbestos fibers that damage the lungs and make breathing difficult.

The paper with all the detailed information can be found on-line at www.btmed.org.
What’s in the Medical Exam?

- **Physical Exam** - Head to toe assessment with emphasis on the skin, lungs, musculoskeletal, and neurological system.
- **Chest X-Ray** - Tests for asbestosis, silica, and other lung problems such as nodules.
- **Hearing Test**
- **Fecal Occult** - Tests for colon cancer.
- **Spirometry** - Tests lung function.
- **Blood Test**, such as:
  - **BeLPT** – Tests for beryllium sensitivity.
  - **CBC** – Tests for blood abnormalities.
  - **General Health Panel** – Tests functions of the liver, kidney, and thyroid; tests for diabetes and high cholesterol.
  - **Heavy metals** such as lead and cadmium.

3 Easy Steps!!

1. Register by calling 1-800-866-9663 or visit [www.btmed.org](http://www.btmed.org).

2. Schedule a work history interview. The interview can be done in person, over the phone, or online at [www.btmed.org](http://www.btmed.org).

3. Schedule a free medical exam with a provider near your residence.

1-800-866-9663 • [www.btmed.org](http://www.btmed.org)

Has it been 3 years since your initial screening?

Call for information about a re-screening.

1-800-866-9663

“I knew I’d been affected by some of the materials I came into contact with out there. So when I received a pamphlet from my union about this program, I signed up right away.”

Charles Reed
Laborers Local 660
Weldon Spring

National Day of Remembrance
October 30, 2009
In thanks for heroes of the Cold War era

The United States Senate has unanimously approved S. RES 151 designating October 30, 2009, a national day of remembrance for uranium workers and nuclear weapons workers who proudly served our country and fought to win the Cold War. DOE will commemorate this day with various events and activities to recognize workers, their families and the communities that carried out and continue to play an integral role ensuring our nation’s security.

More information can be found at [http://www.coldwarpatriots.org/](http://www.coldwarpatriots.org/).
Meet the Oak Ridge Outreach Office

Johnny Ballinger worked at Oak Ridge for over three decades as a member of the Asbestos Workers Local Union 46 and has been the Interviewer at the Oak Ridge Outreach Office since 2001. The office has enrolled more than 5,600 construction workers into the Program.

What is your work experience at Oak Ridge?

“I started out with H.F. Ferguson in 1961 and continued with Rust Engineering once they took over the site in 1966 and worked all the way until 1991. Local 46 sent me to do asbestos work at all three sites: X-10, K-25 and Y-12.

How has your past work experience helped in conducting interviews?

“It definitely helps to know the buildings because it’s been quite a few years since a lot of workers have been out there. Many times during an interview, a worker won’t remember the building number but when I call it what we used to call it, they know it right away.”

As a former Oak Ridge worker, what was your first impression of the medical screening process?

“Good program with a good physical - probably the best I’ve ever had. I recommend it to any worker eligible because we’ve found things early on that have ended up saving workers’ lives.”

What is your role in the medical screening process?

“I do interviews with the Oak Ridge workers to find out where they worked and what exposures they need to be tested for. Then I set them up for their screening at UT (University of Tennessee) Hospital so they can undergo their exam that will detect any health problems they may or may not be aware of.”

What is the most rewarding part of your job?

“I get a lot satisfaction out of helping other Oak Ridge workers. But what I really enjoy is seeing someone walk through the door who I worked with and haven’t seen since we were on the site together. It’s been 25 years since I’ve seen some of these guys, so it’s great to catch up and rehash some stories from back in the day.”

If you worked at Oak Ridge, Call 1-888-464-0009 for information about enrolling in BTMed.

Tell us how we did!

If you’ve received a free screening through the BTMed, please help us out by completing the Survey that was mailed to you after your exam. Your feedback is important to us. Please tell us about your experience!

If you have been through the Program and have not filled out our Quality Assurance Survey, you can find it on-line at www.btmed.org under “Resources and Links.”

You can also call 1-800-866-9663 to request a copy.

**Attention Hanford Workers**

Public meeting – October 28, 2009
All Welcome

Almost 3,500 Hanford workers have participated in the BT Med Program.

Want to know what we’ve found?
Join us for a public meeting on Wednesday, October 28 at 7pm at the Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 598 hall. BTMed representatives will discuss health screening findings. DOE and DOL have been invited to talk about the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program. Local 598 is located at 1328 N. Road 28, Pasco, Wash.

Contact Sherry Gosseen at 509-783-6830 for more information.

“The BTMed has assisted not only me but also many of my co-workers in understanding medical concerns we were not aware of. Knowing you have a problem and knowing what that problem is are two different things.”

Robert Hagans, UA Local 598
Hanford
Building Trades & Metal Trades endorse new bill for Cold War Workers

If passed, the Charlie Wolf Nuclear Workers Compensation Act would amend the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act of 2000 to cover more workers and health problems, streamline procedures for getting compensation, and make the system easier to navigate. The Act is named for a former nuclear worker who struggled for years with the compensation program and recently passed away.

What would the Act change?

- Adds an employee of a contactor or subcontractor of an “atomic weapons employer” to the definition of “atomic weapons employee” who is eligible for compensation.

- Eliminates the requirement that claimants must be subjected to invasive testing procedures to establish the presence of chronic beryllium disease.

- Expands list of cancers to include chronic lymphocytic leukemia, basal cell carcinoma, and skin cancer.

- Places any person who worked at a Department of Energy facility before January 1, 2006 in a “special exposure cohort.”

- Allows claimants previously denied compensation to reapply for compensation given these changes to the Act.


Demolition of the nuclear weapons Rocky Flats Plant in Colorado where Charlie Wolf worked.

Building Trades Outreach Office Locations and Staff

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brookhaven</td>
<td>Angela DeVito</td>
<td>631-727-6406</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fernald</td>
<td>Lou Doll</td>
<td>513-681-0864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hanford</td>
<td>Sherry Gosseen</td>
<td>509-783-6830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INL</td>
<td>Dan Obray</td>
<td>208-233-4611</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kansas City Plant</td>
<td>Walter Smith</td>
<td>816-500-1234</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oak Ridge</td>
<td>Kim Cranford/Johnny Ballinger</td>
<td>1-888-464-0009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paducah</td>
<td>Joe Hudson</td>
<td>1-888-464-0009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portsmouth</td>
<td>Ron Bush</td>
<td>1-888-464-0009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rocky Flats</td>
<td>Dwayne Adkins</td>
<td>303-744-6169 ext.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah River Site</td>
<td>Charles Jernigan/Gordon Rowe</td>
<td>706-722-7272</td>
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For Amchitka, Argonne West, Battelle Labs (King Avenue & West Jefferson), Brush Luckey, GE Evendale, Huntington Pilot Plant, Mallinckrodt, Mound, Pinellas, Piqua, Weldon Springs, and Yucca Mountain

Call Toll Free 1-800-866-9663

Retirees luncheon? Picnic? Union meeting?

Let us know what’s happening in your community and we’ll come introduce the BTMed Program.

Call 1-800-866-9663

This publication was produced by CPWR through funding from the Department of Energy (DE-FC01-06EH06004). The information provided here is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of DOE.

Building Trades National Medical Screening Program

CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training

Mark H. Ayers, President

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Were you a construction worker at a DOE site? If so, please read this.