BTMED news

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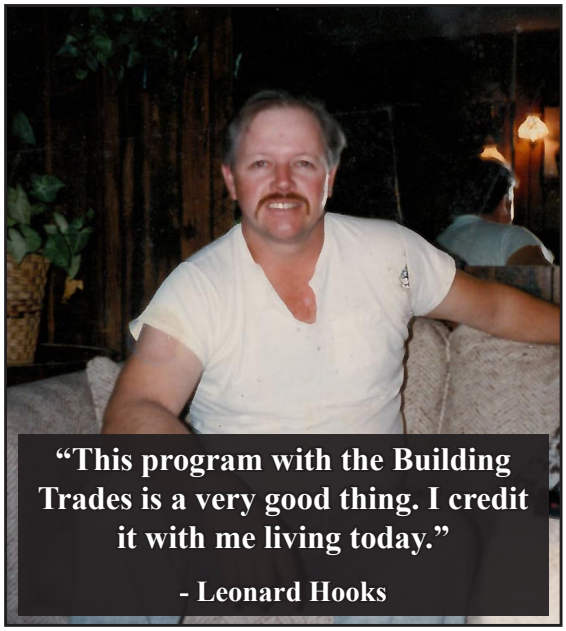
For Oak Ridge worker of 40 years, BTMed's a life-saver

When I went to work there in 1968, they didn't have a whole lot of protection," Leonard Hooks recalls about his early days at the Department of Energy's Oak Ridge sites. "I've seen puddles of mercury run on those floors."

The son of a coal miner, Leonard Hooks joined Ironworkers Local 384 at Oak Ridge after serving in the army in the early 1960's. He would end up staying there until 2006, working at all three Oak Ridge sites. Between Y-12, K-25, and X-10, he figures he has set foot in every building in the entire DOE Oak Ridge complex.

Leonard's experience comes across when he talks about his nearly 40 years at the site. During his time there, he did plenty of welding on old metal structures that had decades of radioactive or chemical contamination. "I've seen asbestos in the air look like snow when they opened the skylights up to bring iron down with a crane," he says. "You could see it just floating around."

Despite being in good shape and feeling healthy, Leonard knew that a lifetime of this could not be good for his body. That's why he has kept up regularly with the Building Trades National Medical Screening Program (BTMed).



"This program with the Building Trades is a very good thing. I credit it with me living today."

- Leonard Hooks

For Leonard, BTMed found medical issues that could drastically impact his life- unless he acted fast.

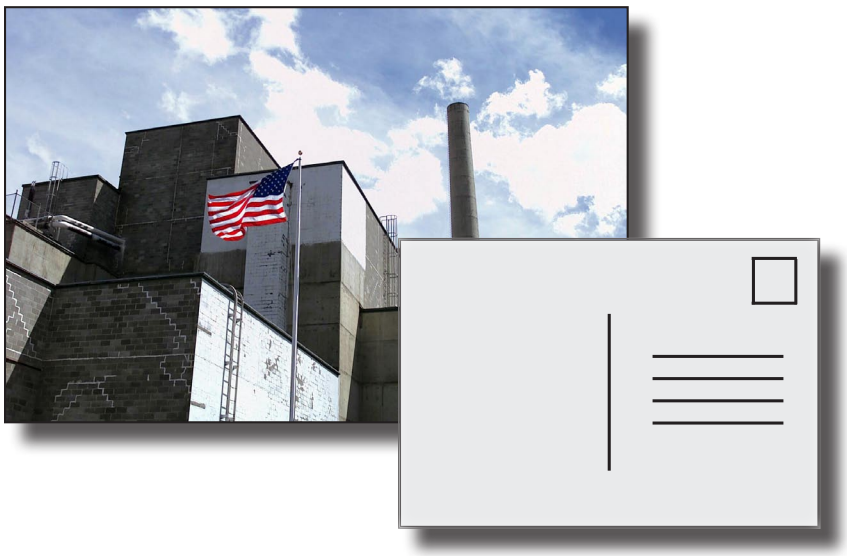
Based on the results of his BTMed exam, Leonard immediately got in touch with specialists who were able to perform a surgery that he believes has added years to his life. "I'm thankful the Building Trades has this program," he says. "I know it's helped me and I know it's helped a lot of other people. A lot of people have died too early because of work-related issues."

If you or someone you know has worked construction at a DOE site, don't hesitate to get in touch with BTMed. Even if you are feeling healthy, it can uncover illnesses with little or no symptoms, like Leonard's. "This program with the Building Trades is a very good thing. I credit it with me living today."

HOW DO I... QUIT SMOKING?

If you worked around asbestos and other harmful materials often found at DOE sites, **your chances of getting lung cancer are even HIGHER if you smoke.**

For help quitting, call **1-800-QUIT-NOW** to talk with someone who knows how to help, at no cost.



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Has It Been Three Years Since Your BTMed Exam?

BTMed offers free re-screenings every three years to stay on top of illnesses with delayed symptoms.

Contact us now at
1-800-866-9663
or
btmed@zenith-american.com

"I look forward to the physical. I feel that they may catch something that my regular physician would overlook."

Charles C. Belangia
Boilermakers Local 687
Savannah River Site
BTMed Participant

Building Trades National
Medical Screening Program
c/o CPWR - The Center for Construction Research and Training
Sean McGarvey, President
Brent Booker, Secretary-Treasurer
8484 Georgia Ave., Suite 1000
Silver Spring, MD 20910

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