BTMED news

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Portsmouth Pipefitter Makes His Re-Screen Exams A Priority

When Robert Purdy followed in his father's footsteps and joined the pipefitters, work was booming. It was the early 1980s, and the Department of Energy had broken ground on process and feeder buildings that would handle enriched uranium at the Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant. A first-year apprentice out of UA Local 577, Robert worked on site alongside his father and his brother.

He continued there as a second- and third-year, and, at that time in his life, he wasn't particularly concerned about his health. It wasn't until 20 years later—when his father passed away from cancer—that his perspective changed.

"That made the light come on," Robert says. "And I was very concerned that there's a possibility I could die from something like that as well."

When he filed an EEOICPA claim for his father's work—which was awarded—he did something else that was perhaps more important: He became proactive about his health. He'd heard about BTMed through his local union, so he enrolled and went through his first exam. That was back in 2005. Now, 18 years later, he's been through several re-screen exams.

"I'm faithful about this," he says. "It's on my calendar—every three years, I make my phone call, and they set up my appointment."

Robert and his wife, Mary, with their grandchildren.

"It's on my calendar—every three years, I make my phone call, and they set up my appointment."

While Robert's re-screen exams have brought him peace of mind, he realizes that the medical advances that have been made over his lifetime would help him deal with any issue that arises.

"If there's something wrong," he says, "there's so many things that technology can do easier, faster, less invasive. You're going to live longer, if that's what you want to do. And I'm sure it is."

It's with this perspective that he encourages other participants like him to make their re-screen exam a priority.

"I have grandchildren, and I'm going to do everything I can preventively do to stay in their lives for as long as I can."

Meet BTMed's new Oak Ridge Outreach Coordinator!

April represents BTMed at the 2023 Tennessee Labor Management Conference.

BTMed welcomes April Watson as its new Oak Ridge Outreach Coordinator. April comes from a family with a long line of asbestos workers and insulators who worked on the Oak Ridge site through Asbestos Workers/Insulators Local 46. She also currently teaches at the East Tennessee Apprenticeship Readiness Program (ETARP), which prepares students for work in the trades.

"I've watched my entire family do this job for over 75 years, so it's been very important to me to learn more about the risk that building trades workers go through and how essential a medical exam is for them," she says. "It's important that there's a program to support them, considering the dangers from working in their field. And this job is a chance to help not just workers but others like me who have fathers and brothers that they care about and want to make sure they stay as healthy as possible."

If you worked at Oak Ridge, you can reach April at (865) 599-9538 or awatson@zenith-american.com.

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Schedule Your Re-Screen Exam Today!

If it's been 3 or more years since your last BTMed exam, you are eligible for a free re-screen exam.
To schedule your exam or if you don't know when your next exam will be,
give us a call at **1-800-866-9663** or email us at **btmed@btmed.org**.

3 Reasons to Get your Re-Screen Exam

1. **Work-Related Health Conditions Can Take Time to Develop**
   Some health conditions can take decades to develop, it is important to continuously monitor your health.
2. **Assess Changes in Your Health Over Time**
   When you participate, there will be an ongoing record that can show how your health may have changed over time.
3. **Prevent Future Health Problems**
   The exam can detect potential health conditions that may be preventable through changes in your lifestyle.

A Letter from an Electrician ...

Hello to my Brothers and Sisters out there in the trades. My name is Richard Walker, and I am retired from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers here in Augusta, Georgia. I'm on oxygen 24/7 because of my compromised lungs. For the last several years, I've had a great job-related physical through BTMed. I go right here in Augusta to the best medical team I know. They are cordial, concerned, and professional.

It takes only a couple of hours. They look for all health problems, answer any questions you have, and it's absolutely free! Go ahead and contact them now.

Fraternally,

Brother Richard Walker, IBEW Local 1579, Former Savannah River Site Worker