



CPWR – The Center for  
Construction Research  
and Training

Building & Construction  
Trades Department,  
AFL-CIO

Duke University  
Medical Center

University of Cincinnati  
Medical Center

Zenith American Solutions

Serving Construction  
Workers from the  
following DOE sites:

Amchitka

Argonne-West

Ashtabula

Battelle Labs – King Ave.

Battelle Labs –  
West Jefferson

Brookhaven  
National Laboratory

Brush Luckey

Fernald

G.E. Evendale

Hanford

Huntington Pilot Plant

INL

Kansas City Plant

Mallinckrodt

Mound

National Energy Tech  
Laboratory

Oak Ridge

Paducah

Pinellas

Piqua

Portsmouth

Rocky Flats

Savannah River Site


Shippingport

Waste Isolation Pilot Plant

Weldon Spring

Yucca Mountain

## Building Trades National Medical Screening Program

P.O. Box 900960 ▪ Seattle, WA 98109 ▪ 1-800-866-9663 

### CADMIUM

#### What is cadmium?

Cadmium is a heavy metal. It typically comes in the form of a silver-white solid or gray powder. Cadmium is used in pigments, metal coatings, silver solder, and batteries.

Cadmium is very toxic, especially to the kidneys.

Cadmium is most dangerous when it is breathed in as a dust or *fume*. Fume is made up of very fine solid particles suspended in air. Construction workers may breathe in cadmium during welding, cutting, burning, or sandblasting on surfaces coated with paint containing cadmium.

#### What are we looking for?

We are looking mainly for signs of kidney injury. When cadmium enters the body, it is deposited in the kidneys. As cadmium builds up, it can cause kidney injury. But it usually takes more than five years of exposure to cadmium before kidney damage occurs.

You will be given blood tests to detect changes in kidney function that may be caused by cadmium. If those tests show kidney damage we will also measure cadmium directly in your urine.

You will receive a letter summarizing your exam and photocopies of your test results. All your results are confidential, as defined in your Consent Statement.

#### What if my test results are positive?

If the tests show possible kidney damage but no cadmium is found, you do not have kidney injury from cadmium. But you should see your own doctor to find out the source of the protein.

If the tests show possible kidney damage from cadmium, you will be referred to your doctor or a specialist. You will be advised of the type of tests or treatment you need.

#### What other steps should I take?

If you work around materials containing cadmium, follow all available precautions and use the protective equipment provided to you. Practice good personal hygiene, such as washing your hands thoroughly, to prevent cadmium from getting on your skin, clothing, or food.

Get regular medical check-ups.

#### What if I have more questions?

If you have questions after this exam, ask your personal physician. Or call our toll-free number at 1-800-866-9663. We will refer you to a professional who can answer your questions.