



107 Cienega St.
Santa Fe, NM 87501
(505) 986-1973 Tel
(505) 986-0997 Fax
ccns@nuclearactive.org
www.nuclearactive.org

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For more information, contact:

Joni Arends
(505) 986-1973
jarends@nuclearactive.org

**New Report Urges "Dose Reconstruction" of LANL;
Concerned Citizens For Nuclear Safety Researchers Document Need for Thorough
Analysis of Historical Radioactive and Chemical Releases to Protect Public Health**

SANTA FE, NM - A scientific review of data on contaminants released by the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), cancer incidence in the surrounding area, and occupational health studies at the site, made public today, calls for a comprehensive dose reconstruction of chemical and radioactive exposures to workers and neighbors from LANL operations.

New Mexico's Right to Know: The Impacts of Los Alamos National Laboratory Operations on Public Health and the Environment was produced by a research team working for Concerned Citizens for Nuclear Safety (CCNS), a Santa Fe-based organization that monitors LANL.

The report finds that there was an increased concentration of plutonium in the air at LANL upwards of 20 times higher than expected, increased cancer incidence and mortality in Los Alamos County when compared to the New Mexico state and U.S. reference populations, and that there are uncertainties and a discriminatory nature associated with existing occupational health studies at LANL. It recommends a complete dose reconstruction of LANL, a thorough investigation into the increased cancer incidence and mortality rates in Los Alamos County, and health studies for estimating occupational risks at LANL by involving all current and former employees.

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New Report Urges Dose Reconstruction of Los Alamos Lab

"*New Mexico's Right to Know* serves as an early warning of harm to public health and the environment from LANL operations," explained CCNS Executive Director Joni Arends. "It's important to understand the nature of exposures from LANL operations both to aid those whose health has been endangered and to prevent further harm to workers, the public and our environment."

The report supports the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Los Alamos Historical Document Retrieval and Assessment Project, which is currently threatened due to budget cuts and heightened security at LANL. The Project is the first step toward a dose reconstruction, which would provide an estimate of the amount of radiation and chemicals to which those living in communities surrounding LANL may have been exposed.

"Unless the dose reconstruction continues, LANL employees and those living downwind and downstream from the facility may never know the danger that this facility may pose to their health and well being," said Arends.

The report is available by contacting CCNS at (505) 986-1973 or at www.nuclearactive.org/docs/RighttoKnow.pdf.

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Supplemental Media Advisory

New Mexico's Right to Know was written by three authors and produced by CCNS. It includes:

A Review of Historical and Current Emissions of Radioactive Materials from LANL into the Air by Bernd Franke, Scientific Director of the ifeu - Institut für Energie und Umweltforschung in Heidelberg, Germany. Franke's investigation addresses the issue of plutonium releases from LANL into the air and the adequacy of air monitoring equipment to detect those releases. Franke also investigates the potential doses of radiation to which a person may be exposed by LANL operations.

Franke says, "A careful reconstruction of historical releases and subsequent radiation exposures is necessary at LANL. Given the different circumstances and the lack of a final [emissions] estimate for LANL, a precise evaluation of the potential impacts of LANL releases is not possible at this time. Unless the work of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention continues, such an evaluation may never be possible."

Cancer Incidence and Mortality in Los Alamos County and New Mexico 1970-1996 by Catherine M. Richards, M.S. Richards' investigation is in response to community concerns about occurrences of specific types of cancer in Los Alamos County (LAC). Richards finds increased cancer incidence rates for LAC, compared to the New Mexico state reference population, for cancers of the female breast (50% increase), melanoma (125%), non-Hodgkin's lymphoma (48%), ovary (45%), prostate (49%), testicular (82%) and thyroid (106%). Richards also finds elevated cancer mortality rates in LAC for breast (41% increase), melanoma (63%) and ovarian (27%) when compared with the U.S. reference population.

Richards states, "The high mortality rate for breast cancer, when compared with the US rates, is of concern and should be investigated. We also see high incidence rates for thyroid and testicular cancers, particularly in comparison with the state and U.S. rates."

A Review of Occupational Health Studies at LANL by Steve Wing, Ph.D., and David Richardson, Ph.D. Wing and Richardson find that only employees of primary contractors have been included in occupational health studies at LANL. Most of the occupational health studies at LANL have been limited to white Anglo University of California (UC) employees. Studies of the support workforce, which include many Hispanics and Native Americans, have been much less complete than those of the UC workforce. In one study, personnel records were available for 97% of the UC workers, but only 20% of the support workers, and urinalysis records were available for 39% of the UC workers, but only four percent of the support workers.

Wing says, "It is important that occupational and environmental exposures to hazardous agents be minimized, and that workers and the general public be involved in decision-making about exposure standards and health-related research."