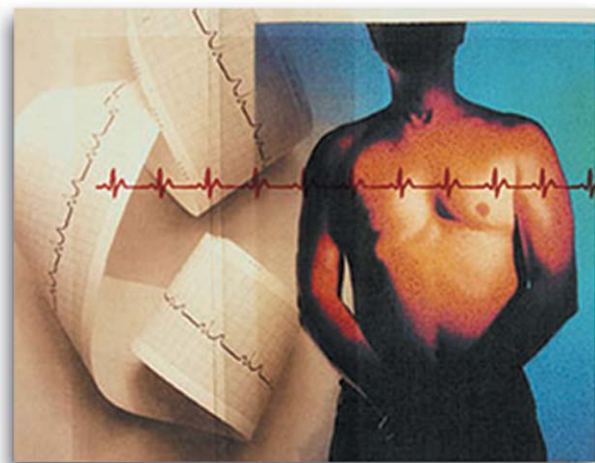


Worker Health Protection Program Expands Lung Cancer Screening Component

In the United States, lung cancer is the leading cause of death from cancer in both men and women. Unfortunately, many cases of lung cancer are discovered by chest x-ray at a late stage, when treatment is least effective. Because of the limitations of the chest x-ray in detecting lung cancer, several studies have been done to determine if a CAT scan of the chest is more sensitive than a standard chest x-ray in detecting lung cancer.

One of these studies looked at 1,000 people who were determined to be at high risk for lung cancer. In this study, the CAT scan detected nearly four times as many lung cancers as the chest x-ray. Of equal importance was that most of the lung cancer



cases detected by the CAT scan were at the earliest stage, when treatment is most effective.

PACE is pleased to announce that we will be able to bring this new technology to the Worker Health Protection Program. Gaseous diffusion plant workers with

the greatest risk for developing lung cancer will be invited to participate in the CAT scan program, based in part on their history of

exposure to agents known to increase the risk of lung cancer – such as radiation and asbestos. A custom-made trailer that will house our own CAT scan machine will travel between the local union halls at Paducah, Oak Ridge and Portsmouth, providing a convenient means of access for this screening.

By making the CAT scan available to selected gaseous diffusion plant workers, a vitally important need will be addressed for those at greatest risk of the most common form of cancer.

PACE/Queens College WHPP Health Watch

Fall 2000 Vol. 1 Issue 1

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Visit The WHPP Website . . .
www.pace-workerhealth.org



The WHPP Program has a website that provides basic information about the PACE/Queens College medical screening program, fact sheets about important workplace hazards such as asbestos, radiation and beryllium and links to other websites concerned with workplace health.

important information

gaseous diffusion sites

fact sheet

worker health links

who we are

what's new

home



Health Watch

A newsletter of the PACE/Queens College Worker Health Protection Program

Volume 1, Issue 1 Fall 2000

Message from Boyd Young, President, PACE International Union

I want to thank each of you Cold War veterans for your commitment and courage under fire from both the U. S. government and contractors. You fought a silent war where secrecy, lies and cover-ups were standard operating procedures. You suffered exposures without adequate protection or your knowledge. I want to assure you that PACE intends to help you get the long overdue recognition, medical assistance and compensation you deserve.

No one can adequately make up for the mistakes of the past and provide true justice. But we can work together to pressure Congress to provide meaningful compensation

and health benefits for sick workers and retirees.

I also want to congratulate and thank Secretary Richardson for opening the door for a federal workers compensation bill for atomic workers. We are grateful for his foresight in providing workers at the gaseous diffusion plants the opportunity for an advanced lung cancer detection program. This is an item the insurance industry balks at providing because of the cost.

I look forward to our program expanding in the years ahead and working to give something back to those who have done so much for our country and our union.

What is the PACE "Worker Health Protection Program"?

The **Worker Health Protection Program** (or "WHPP") is provided as a service to workers from four Department of Energy (DOE) facilities: three gaseous diffusion plants in Kentucky, Ohio, and Tennessee, and the Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL). Workers from those facilities have expressed concerns about their job exposures to hazardous and radioactive materials and how those exposures may affect their health.

In 1993, Congress passed a law (part of the "1993 Defense Reauthorization Act") that required DOE to set aside funds for programs that would help evaluate the health of their former workers. The labor union PACE (Paper, Allied Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union), which includes the former OCAW International Union, represents many of the workers at these DOE facilities. PACE joined with two universities — Queens College of the City

University of New York and the University of Massachusetts at Lowell – to design and offer this program.

For workers interested in participating, the Program provides, free of charge:

- Health risk information
- A free medical screening exam, including chest X-ray and breathing tests
- An educational workshop

Ours is unique among other similar screening programs being offered nationwide, because workers (both former and current) help design and conduct this Program. We have a national toll-free number (1-888-241-1199) that you can call to find out more about the medical screening, the workshops, and what we know about health risks from working at DOE facilities.

The PACE Worker Health Protection Program set out to make "a tangible improvement in people's lives," and we will keep working to fulfill that goal.



Worker Health Protection Program

Message from Dr. Markowitz, WHPP Project Director

Isn't it a matter of simple common sense that people who have contributed to the general good of this country deserve to receive medical help, to diminish the chances of developing fatal occupational illnesses caused by workplace exposures to toxic chemicals and radiation? After all, the government recognizes, through Social Security and Medicare, the rights of older people to receive some basic level of material and medical support beyond their working years.

Somehow, however, this consensus about what older people in the United States deserve has never been extended to include medical benefits for workers who have spent their lives toiling in hazardous workplaces that jeopardize their health. This is particularly strange when you consider that Federal law **requires** that employers provide workers with a workplace that is safe and healthy.

The PACE Worker Health Protection Program is a part of a larger program supported by the Department of Energy that, for the very first time in this country, addresses the need to provide information and medical support to workers exposed to radiation and other toxic materials.



Thus, our program has a historic dimension. A very large class of workers — nuclear weapons plant workers — who put their lives on the line for the general good is now receiving the benefit of medical testing and an opportunity to learn about exposures they have endured that may be causing them health problems.

We think that the Worker Health Protection Program should be seen as a national test that will be transformed over time to become a basic right of workers to protect their health and to live as long a life as possible. Ultimately, of course, we strive for workplaces that are free, or virtually free, of occupational hazards.

In the meantime, we start with this medical screening and education program. Our hope is that eventually common sense and ethics will prevail and that the Worker Health Protection Program will be recognized as a fundamental right of all workers in this country.

Hello Again from the Worker Health Protection Program (or just call us "WHPP!")

Chances are you have already been a participant in the WHPP medical screening, and have completed your exam. If so, **you are one of over 1,900 former workers** nationwide who have completed their exams so far. Hundreds more are interested and standing by to get their free exam.

At the three gaseous diffusion facilities, over 3000 people have called our toll-free number wanting to participate! That number includes about 800 callers from Paducah, Kentucky; 850 callers from Portsmouth, Ohio; and over 1,350 callers from the Oak Ridge, Tennessee area.

At the Idaho National Engineering & Environ-

mental Laboratory (INEEL), a site recently added to the Program, over 400 interested people have contacted us so far, and we have begun screening exams at three clinics, 2 in Idaho Falls and 1 in Pocatello. We hope to reach our goal of providing 1,200 exams this year to **former** INEEL workers.

Looking ahead, WHPP is in the process of expanding its eligibility requirements to include **current** workers at the three gaseous diffusion plants. In the first year screening exams were offered (1999-2000), we achieved our goal of completing 1,200 exams per year for former gaseous diffusion plant workers.

WHPP SUCCESS AT-A-GLANCE

(as of September 1, 2000)

Number of participants who:

- called for screening appointments: **3000**
- completed medical screening examination: **1900**
- went through educational workshops: **1200**



Study of Exposures to Radioactive Materials at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant

In January 2000, a project to look at past radiation exposures at the Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant got off the ground. The project came about in response to the workers' concerns about past exposures to transuranic materials, such as plutonium and neptunium, at the three gaseous diffusion sites. (See photo.)

The project is funded by the DOE and is being conducted by a joint research team that includes the University of Utah, PACE, and Mark Griffon, a health physics consultant to PACE.

Hazards Not Communicated to Workers

Although historic data shows that transuranic materials were present at the Paducah site as early as 1953, former workers from Paducah were not aware of this until reading about it in recent newspaper articles.

It is now known that the presence of these highly toxic materials was not communicated to the workers. Also, there is evidence that some internal exposures may not have been adequately monitored. In fact, there was no urine testing data for transuranics before 1989 in the database provided to the exposure study.

A 1960 memo written by two Atomic Energy Commission doctors said that 300 workers at greater risk of exposure to transuranics

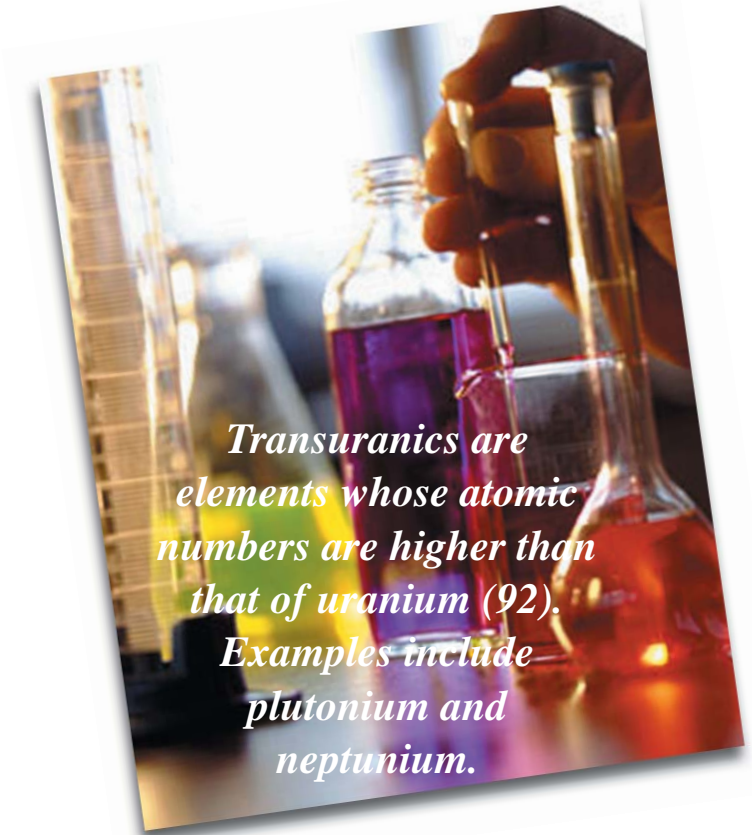
should be monitored. However, Paducah site management decided against such testing because of fear that the union would ask for hazard pay.

Exposures Higher in Some Areas but Spread Throughout the Plant

The Paducah exposure research team identified jobs and areas of highest risk to radiation exposure. The team identified several areas (C-400, C-410/420, C-720 Converter shop) where elevated levels of transuranic materials in the air may have resulted in doses higher than the current limits. Data collected in previous radiation surveys at the Paducah site showed that these contaminants spread into almost all process areas and, in some cases, into non-process areas including lunchrooms.

Important Data Missing from Records

One very significant finding that the research team uncovered was that there were numerous gaps and/or deficiencies in the data available at the Paducah site. Specifically, there were many cases where written records did not agree with data in electronic databases. Of further concern was the finding that the elevated exposure data tended to be the data that was missing. During the team's risk mapping sessions, workers reported elevated badge



readings were often "thrown out". The problems in the available data will make it difficult to calculate an individual's lifetime dose during work at Paducah.

Report from Exposure Study to be Released Soon

The Paducah report will be finalized during the fall of 2000. The team is planning to present the findings of the

Paducah study to DOE, the Paducah workers and the community. After the completion of the Paducah report, the team will conduct similar efforts at the Portsmouth and Oak Ridge sites. For more information regarding the Paducah exposure assessment report, contact Mark Griffon at 603-893-4977.

Your WHPP Local Coordinator

Each of the WHPP plants has a PACE members assigned to provide educational workshops, answer questions about the medical screening and guide workers through the workers' compensation process. If you ever need any help, do not hesitate to call.

Plant	Coordinator	Telephone Number
Paducah Gaseous Diffusion Plant	Phillip Foley	270-851-3187 (home)
Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant	Mark Lewis	740-289-0493 (pager)
Oak Ridge Gaseous Diffusion Plant	Tom Moser	865-873-3245 (pager)
INEEL	David Fry	208-522-4422 (home)

Medical Testing for DOE Workers Exposed to Beryllium

Chronic Beryllium Disease (CBD)

Beryllium, a naturally occurring metal that was used in the production of nuclear weapons, can cause a serious lung disease called “chronic beryllium disease” (CBD). CBD is caused by breathing in particles of beryllium that are small enough to travel deep into the lung. The particles may cause an allergic reaction that leads to inflammation of the lung tissue. Over time, this constant inflammation can cause scar tissue to form. Large areas of inflammation and scar tissue can prevent the lung from working properly. Today, CBD is not considered a fatal disease but it can lead to disability. The most common symptoms of CBD include:

- shortness of breath
- fatigue
- cough
- loss of appetite/weight loss

Special Medical Screening Test for CBD Available

Although not all exposed workers develop CBD, many DOE workers are at risk. The PACE Worker Health Protection Program (or “WHPP”) has therefore selected certain workers — which were either known to be exposed or likely to have been exposed to beryllium — to receive a **special blood test** during the medical screening.

This special blood test, called the *beryllium lymphocyte proliferation test* (BeLPT), looks to see whether the body has developed an allergic reaction or *sensitivity* to beryllium. The lymphocytes (pronounced **lim**-fo-sites) are a type of white blood cell that the body uses to fight off foreign particles; in other words, they are part of the body’s allergic or immune system response. The BeLPT test measures how much the lymphocytes react to beryllium. In a sensitized person, the lymphocytes will usually show quick growth (proliferation) when exposed to beryllium. This is called a positive or abnormal BeLPT blood test result.

Follow-up on Abnormal Beryllium Blood Tests

A positive or abnormal BeLPT can be the first sign of CBD. A positive test can help the doctor to distinguish CBD from other diseases that have the same symptoms. It is important to note, however, that just because your beryllium blood test is positive, this does not mean you definitely have chronic beryllium disease. It does mean that you should get further medical tests to find out if in fact you do have the disease.

As with all medical tests, there is a chance that the beryllium blood test could have false positives (abnormal results when they are really normal) or false negatives (normal results that are really abnormal). For this reason, the WHPP program will ask anyone with a positive BeLPT result to provide another blood sample so the test can be repeated. This repeat test will be done at the same clinic where the individual attended the WHPP medical screening.



Participants Who Test Positive Can Get Free Medical Evaluation for CBD

Any *PACE Worker Health Protection Program* participant whose second blood test confirms a sensitivity to beryllium is eligible to participate in a special medical program run by the DOE. The purpose of the program is to determine if workers actually have chronic beryllium disease. The tests are free and may include breathing tests, CAT scans of the lung and analysis of lung tissue. It is important to get a confirmed diagnosis of CBD for several reasons:

- You are more likely to get **proper treatment**. (There is a chance your regular doctor will not recognize beryllium disease and could unknowingly treat you for the another condition.)
- Early treatment **slows down the progress** of the disease in some people.
- Identifying beryllium disease can **prevent complications** from developing. For example, the doctor may advise you to take steps to protect your lungs such as getting annual flu shots or one-time pneumonia shots or treating lung infections early.
- Once work-related beryllium disease is diagnosed, it is recommended that further exposure be prevented. This may mean changing what you do at work.
- A confirmed diagnosis of chronic beryllium disease is needed if you intend to file a workers’ compensation claim.

The letter that is sent to *PACE Worker Health Protection Program* participants with two positive beryllium test results will explain how to participate in this free, follow-up program. (These follow-up medical tests **will not** be done at the same clinic where the screening was done.) Participants who test negative on the second blood test are eligible through this DOE follow-up program to receive a third blood test to confirm their sensitivity to beryllium.

Any questions, call the WHPP toll-free number 1-888-241-1199.

Occupational Illness Compensation for Atomic Workers: Legislation Update

DOE Announces Proposal to Compensate Thousands of Sick Workers

In April 2000, a National Economic Council (NEC) report entitled “Occupational Illness Compensation for Department of Energy Contractor Personnel”, concluded that “there is evidence that current and former contractor workers at DOE nuclear weapons production facilities are at increased risk of illness from occupational exposures associated with the production of nuclear weapons.”

Of equal importance, the NEC also concluded that the states do not adequately compensate workers for occupational illness due to the numerous, overwhelming barriers that exist in the state compensation system. In

response to the NEC report and to information gathered during hearings at DOE weapons sites around the country, in April 2000, Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson announced a Clinton/Gore Administration initiative to provide compensation for work-related illnesses to atomic workers.

“We are moving forward to do the right thing by these workers,” Secretary Richardson said. “The men and women who served our nation in the nuclear weapons industries of World War II and the Cold War labored under difficult and dangerous conditions with some of the most hazardous materials known to mankind. This is a fair and reasonable program. It will compensate workers and get them the help they

Are Your Congressional Representatives on this List?

HR4398 is the most comprehensive compensation legislation for atomic workers proposed to date. Look below to see if your representatives are on this list of HR4398 co-sponsors.

Rep. Berkley, Shelley (D-NV)	Rep. Klink, Ron (D-PA)
Rep. Brown, Sherrod (D-OH)	Rep. Lucas, Ken (D-KY)
Rep. Clement, Bob (D-TN)	Rep. Phelps, David (D-IL)
Rep. DeGette, Diana (D-CO)	Rep. Portman, Rob (R-OH)
Rep. Doolittle, John T. (R-CA)	Rep. Strickland, Ted (D-OH)
Rep. Duncan, John J. Jr. (R-TN)	Rep. Stupak, Bart (D-MI)
Rep. Gibbons, Jim (R-NV)	Rep. Tancredo, Thomas G. (R-CO)
Rep. Gordon, Bart (D-TN)	Rep. Turner, Jim (D-TX)
Rep. Hall, Tony (D-OH)	Rep. Udall, Mark (D-CO)
Rep. Jenkins, William L. (R-TN)	Rep. Udall, Tom (D-NM)
Rep. Kanjorski, Paul (D-PA)	Rep. Wamp, Zach (R-TN)

have long deserved.”

Legislative Responses to the NEC Report

Immediately after the NEC report was released, the Energy Employee Occupational Illness Compensation Act was introduced:

the Voinovich-Reid bill in the Senate, S.2915; and the Whitfield-Strickland bill in the House, H.R. 4398.

In June, the Senate added the Thompson-Bingaman Amendment to the Defense

(continued on page 5)

INEEL Site Added to PACE Worker Health Protection Program

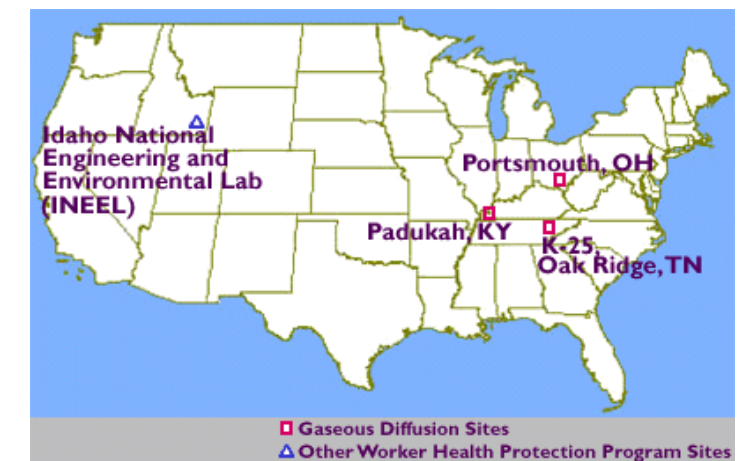
The PACE Worker Health Protection Program has added a new site to the medical screening program — the *Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory (INEEL)*. Three clinics have been selected to provide the medical examinations: the Bannock Urgent Care Clinic in Pocatello; the Community Care Clinic in Idaho Falls; and Dr. Boge at Eastern Idaho Regional Medical Center in Idaho Falls. Approximately 1,200 former INEEL workers will be screened this year.

David Fry, PACE Local Coordinator for Idaho, has started conducting the INEEL educational workshops. As of September 1, nearly 200 former INEEL employees had been through the workshop. According to David

Fry, “The PACE medical screening and education program is a great service to former workers. The workshops have provided a great opportunity for workers to ask questions, talk about their health concerns, and prepare the necessary paperwork to take to the doctor. Because this program includes both salaried and hourly workers, there is a wealth of experience and knowledge to be shared during the workshops.”

Mr. Fry continued, “We know that the workshops and medical examinations are successful and provide a much needed service. Just a year ago, I was knocking on doors to find local doctors and former workers to participate. At this point in time, for

the most part, classes and clinic appointments are happening because people call me!”



The map shows the locations of the four WHPP sites. In addition to these sites, there are 10 other medical testing programs at DOE weapon sites across the country. (Other sites include Savannah River, Hanford, Rocky Flats, Nevada Test Site, and Los Alamos.) These are part of a pilot program set up by DOE to determine whether it is feasible or necessary to set up a large-scale medical screening program for former weapon’s plant workers.

MESSAGE FROM TOM MOSER, PACE LOCAL COORDINATOR - OAK RIDGE K-25

Every worthwhile program has many important components. One of the most important components of the PACE Worker Health Protection Program is the **Educational Workshop**. Although each of the gaseous diffusion plant sites (K-25, Paducah, and Portsmouth) has the same program, the same training material, the same concepts, and the same goals, the workshops are orchestrated somewhat differently. Each program has had a huge measure of success and has done an outstanding job of accomplishing the ongoing and unending mission of educating DOE workers about the hazards that may have affected their health.

I would like to go through a few things that we do at the Oak Ridge site. First, we try to target current and former workers who are scheduled for their physical within the upcoming month. This enables the participants to arrive at their physicals with

knowledge of the medical screening program. We also help participants with their screening paperwork and signature documents. As a rule, we invite 25 people to attend each workshop. Normally, about 18 to 20 to show up. We have 2 or 3 workshops per month, depending on several things such as the number of current and former workers who called to participate in the program, workload at Queens College and the local clinic schedule.

After participants introduce themselves, we go through the workbook. The workbook was written by current workers who are familiar with each site and have many years of experience as worker-trainers or OSHECs. The workbook not only introduces the program but also very skillfully shows the participants other needed spin-off goals and programs such as retiree clubs. Retiree clubs serve as both a social

gathering and a mechanism for working together as a group on legislative issues such as the current federal workers' compensation initiative. We emphasize the power of current and former workers as a large voting constituency. This constituency can approach their senators and congressmen about concerns that have been overlooked by the federal government — issues such as pension increases; paid health care benefits; and the need for official recognition of their status as true veterans — veterans of the Cold War.

Last but not least, a workshop is a place to see some of your fellow workers that maybe you haven't seen in sometime. I always look forward to conducting a workshop. I get to see some of the highly skilled workers who at one time had the monumental chore of training me! That particular subject always brings on an old war story and more importantly a

roar of laughter. However, there is always a flip side of any coin. A workshop always brings a note of sadness as I see the deteriorating health of many friends and fellow workers. Ninety per cent of our former K-25 workers have to wear hearing aids or have experienced some form of hearing loss. Some of them come to the workshop walking with canes or pulling their oxygen bottles. Still there are others who attend who are confined to a wheel chair.

When a former or current gaseous diffusion worker has to spend the bulk of his pension on health care or is forced to stay on the job even if sick, something is wrong. All he wanted to do was to be a good taxpaying citizen and make a decent living. He never asked to be lied to and over-exposed to radiation and chemicals. He, like everybody else, has the right to a long and healthy retirement.

Know Your State's Workers' Compensation Rules

If you receive a letter from the physicians at Queens College telling you of a possible occupationally induced condition, contact your local coordinator for help in filing a workers' compensation claim.

You should do this **immediately**, since there are time limits for notifying past employers and filing a claim. In other words, the clock starts ticking once you have been notified of a work-related disease. If you do not notify your employer or file your claim within these time

limits, you may lose your chance to ever get compensation. Below is a list of the time limits for the four WHPP locations.

If you worked for several different employers over the years, file the claim with the last employer.

Workers' compensation varies from state to state. However, in most states workers' compensation will pay for lost wages, medical expenses and medical devices. In some cases, workers' compensation may pay for travel to and from the

doctor.

When you file a workers' compensation claim, you do not have to lay out any money for legal fees. The four states below **require** attorneys to

act on a *contingency basis*, that is, you don't pay the lawyer unless you win your compensation claim. The legal fees are subtracted from the money awarded to you.

Location	You must provide written notification to your employer within:	You must file a claim within:
Idaho	60 days (If you can't find employer-you have 90 days to notify the Industrial Commission)	1 year
Tennessee	30 days	1 year
Kentucky	"as soon as practicable"	3 years
Ohio	no requirement	2 years

Compensation Legislation Update

(continued from page 3)

Authorization Act for 2001. The Amendment is modeled after the Federal Employee Compensation Act (FECA) that pays for wage replacement and medical benefits at levels that are more generous than any state program in the country. Workers can also choose the option of a one-time lump sum benefit of \$200,000 plus ongoing medical benefits. (The Administration proposed a lump sum of only \$100,000 and no ongoing medical benefits.)

Under the Thompson-Bingaman Amendment, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is required to make a best estimate of dose based on existing records and then determine if the cancer is likely to be work-related. For some workers, however, it is not possible to reconstruct radiation dose and so the Thompson Amendment creates a "special exposure cohort." This cohort covers certain workers in four plants — the three gaseous diffusion plants and the Amchitka Island Test Site — and allows them to be compensated automatically for certain types of cancer listed in the amendment without having to go through the HHS radiation dose estimate and evaluation process. In other words, for those included in the "special cohort", there is a presumption that certain cancers are work-related. Workers that did not work at these four sites whose exposure records are missing

or deficient, can petition to be added to the "special cohort".

Other features of the Thompson Amendment are that the compensation program will be run by the Department of Labor — not DOE — and that it is funded as an entitlement program. This means money does not have to be appropriated each year for the program. One major shortcoming of the Senate Amendment, however, is that it only covers radiation, silica and beryllium exposure; it does not cover illnesses related to chemicals or heavy metals.

Unfortunately, the House has not held hearings or adopted any compensation legislation. The House Defense Authorization Act only contains a resolution urging Congress to act on the compensation issue this year.

Steps You Can Take to Help Pass Meaningful Compensation Legislation

The Senate and House are now in conference to come up with a final proposal that will go back to the floors of the House and Senate to be voted upon. The final bill will then go to the President for approval. It is critical for current and former workers to contact their Congressional representatives to urge that the Thompson-Bingaman Amendment to the Senate Defense Authorization Act (now referred to as HR4205) be kept intact. Also, representatives should be urged to sign onto H.R. 4398, the most comprehensive legislation filed to date.

Views of Sam Ray, Portsmouth Retiree Representative

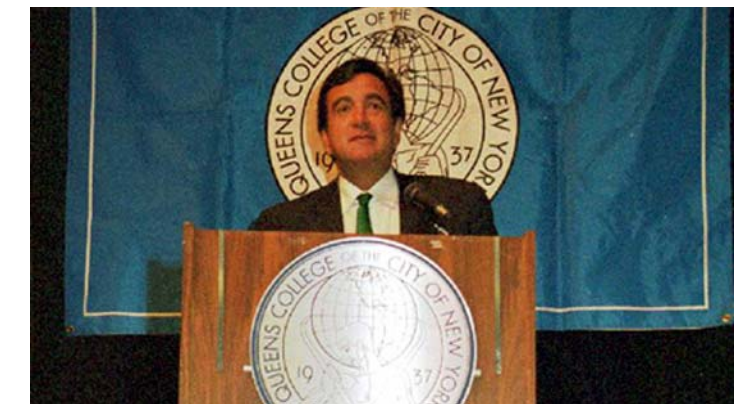
Many retirees don't get complete physicals because their insurance doesn't cover the cost. Some people go 5-10 years without a physical. The PACE Worker Health Protection Program (WHPP) is an excellent opportunity to get a free, comprehensive exam and I make sure the retirees know that. I also tell the retirees to be sure and tell the doctor conducting the exams about any health problems that they have so they can get some free advice. Some people won't volunteer information so I tell them "don't be afraid to talk."

I went for my medical screening examination to Dr. Wheeler at Southern Ohio

Medical Clinic. He's a character, but he's good. I didn't have to wait very long and once I got in to see Dr. Wheeler, he was thorough and didn't rush me.

I work as the PACE WHPP retiree representative at Portsmouth. Mostly, I help people with filling out their questionnaires, give them direction on what to do with abnormal result letters and provide updates on the pending compensation legislation before Congress. I've had a lot of jobs in the local over the years, but none of them can match this one for feeling like I am actually doing something to make a difference.

Secretary Richardson Speaks at Queens College



Secretary of Energy Bill Richardson visited Queens College and met the WHPP Medical Screening Office team on May 19, 2000. **Left to right:** Paul Cooney, Zulleyka Ortega, Kim Knowlton, Ludmila Malagon, Dr. Al Miller, Secretary Richardson, Queens College President Sessums, Dr. Steve Markowitz, Deena Hailoo, Lori Bode, Holger Eisl.

