

Dragon, Karen E. (CDC/NIOSH/EID)

From: Tami Thatcher
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2015 8:33 PM
To: NIOSH Docket Office (CDC)
Cc:
Subject: NIOSH needs to address historically contaminated INL drinking water

Dear folks at NIOSH,

Regarding Site Profile/Docket Number (018), the Idaho National Engineering laboratory, I would like to once again point out that highly contaminated drinking water was present at various INL facilities for many years, from the 1950s to today.

The levels of contamination were often not detected until many years, if not decades, after the contamination was present. Even then, the results were often not widely reported if reported at all.

I have pieced together a considerable amount of contamination data for chemical and radionuclide contaminants from Department of Energy reports and US Geological Survey reports and data.

To create a full picture of the complete set of contaminants and historical levels would require not only evaluating what was monitored. It would require filling in the unmonitored or undetected levels of contaminants.

The federal maximum contaminant levels (MCLs) that began to be acknowledged when state safety drinking water laws went into affect in the late 1980s had been exceeded for many years at various INL facilities.

At INL's Central Facilities Area wells were contaminated from the INL's INTEC disposal well plume that resulted from nuclear fuel reprocessing.

Tritium levels exceeded five times the MCL at Central Facilities Area (CFA). Iodine-129 levels were near the MCL, exceeding it at INTEC. Chemical contaminants were simultaneously present.

The INL worker epidemiology report shows elevated brain tumors, leukemia and lymphatic cancer for radiation and non-radiation workers, relative to surrounding populations.

The answer could be related, at least in part, by the years of contaminated INL drinking water which so far NIOSH has ignored.

It's time for NIOSH to commit to addressing this huge omission and sustaining a public outreach program to acknowledge this serious omission.

Please let me know when and where these comments will be posted.

Sincerely,

Tami Thatcher

Former INL Safety Analyst and Nuclear Safety Consultant who has many friends and former colleagues who have died of brain tumors and cancers after working at INL and were not radiation workers.