S S F L C O M M U N I T Y
A D V I S O R Y G R O U P

Citizens Working Together for the Responsible Cleanup of the Former Santa Susana Field Laboratory

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Health Study Fact Sheet

In July 2014, the Santa Susana Field Laboratory (SSFL) Community Advisory Group (CAG) released a comprehensive review of past SSFL-related health studies performed since 1990. The 28 page document, entitled "Review of Studies of Health Effects Possibly Related to the Operation of the Santa Susana Field Laboratory", contains the summaries and conclusions from 11 cancer registry epidemiological and two pathway studies. Contrary to popularly held beliefs, none of the studies confirm connections between SSFL operations and offsite or worker health effects.

Since 1990, in response to community concerns, there have been at least nine epidemiological cancer studies of residents of neighborhoods in the vicinity of the SSFL and two studies of Rocketdyne workers. The studies were conducted by:

- California Department of Health Services (1990 and 1992),
- Tri-County Cancer Registry (1990, 1997 and 2006),
- University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Public Health (1997, 1999, 2001),
- International Epidemiological Institute (2005),
- Dr. Hal Morgenstern of the University of Michigan School of Public Health (2007), and most recently
- Dr. Thomas Mack of the University of Southern California Keck School of Medicine (2014).

The report discusses these studies by taking the authors' information directly from their papers augmented with information from other sources. The universal outcome of the studies is the inability to establish any statistically significant relationship between chemicals and/or radionuclides used at SSFL and any adverse health effects on either workers or nearby residents.

In 1999, the then-available studies were reviewed by California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal/EPA), Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) of the U. S. Center for Disease Control (CDC). An additional review of the previous studies was conducted in 2014, by Dr. Thomas Mack. The reviewers confirmed both the results of the previous studies and their inherent limitations.

In his study, Dr. Mack concluded that while it is not possible to unequivocally rule out any offsite carcinogenic effects from SSFL, no evidence was found of measureable offsite cancer causation as a result of migration of carcinogenic substances from the SSFL. The most pessimistic results, cited by Dr. Morgenstern, are within the range of expected statistical variation and he has acknowledged the methodological limitations of his study. Dr. Morgenstern concludes: *"There is no direct evidence from this investigation, however, that these observed associations reflect the effects of environmental exposures originating at SSFL."*

Despite the consistent conclusions of the epidemiological studies of off-site effects, some community members continue to assert contrary conclusions and voice beliefs which contrast with the studies' findings. Similarly, they cite conclusions of the UCLA studies of worker health that are inconsistent with those of a more extensive Rocketdyne study, despite weakness in the UCLA studies which are identified in a review by ATSDR. The pattern is continued with regard to pathway studies, where an overly conservative UCLA study is used to support the claims of off-site health effects, despite substantial questions about the validity of the UCLA study.

The report can be downloaded from the CAG website http://ssflcag.net, which also contains information about the CAG. The CAG is a broadly based community group formed in the Spring of 2013 to provide an opportunity for the community, affected by the environmental response actions undertaken by Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) at the SSFL, to participate in the decision making process. The role of the CAG is to help identify community concerns and assist in their resolution.