

Illness and Injury Surveillance Program

What happens to medical information?

Funding from the Office of Illness and Injury Prevention Programs supports staff at participating sites to coordinate the secure electronic transfer of information to the surveillance program data center at the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE) in Oak Ridge, Tennessee. All data are checked for completeness and validity. Preliminary analyses are conducted by ORISE and then sent to epidemiologists in the Office of Illness and Injury Prevention Programs for further evaluation and interpretation.

Summaries of the data analyses conducted for participating sites are posted on our web site at:

www.hss.energy.gov/HealthSafety/WSHP/epi/surv

The Surveillance Reports are also distributed to the occupational medicine departments, to site management, safety offices, and worker representatives across the complex. The public may access these reports either through the web site or by visiting DOE reading rooms.

Where do I get more information?

Questions about this program or issues related to worker health can be addressed to:

Clifton H. Strader, Ph.D.
Program Manager
(301) 903-5799
cliff.strader@hq.doe.gov

or

Bonnie S. Richter, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Illness and
Injury Prevention Programs
(301) 903-4501
bonnie.richter@hq.doe.gov



Illness and Injury Surveillance Program

What is Illness and Injury Surveillance at the Department of Energy?

The health of the contractor work force is a corporate responsibility of the Department of Energy (DOE). DOE strives to ensure that work is safely conducted at every site. Collecting and analyzing information on illness and injury is a good way to evaluate how safely work is being performed across the complex.

Illness and Injury Surveillance monitors and assesses the overall health of the current work force, with the goal of identifying groups that may be at increased risk of occupational illness and injury. In addition, health outcomes related to aging and lifestyle choices which impact the health of the work force can be identified.

Surveillance identifies opportunities for site safety and health managers to apply intervention strategies to reduce illness and injury across the DOE complex.

The Illness and Injury Surveillance Program began as a pilot project in the mid 1980s. The pilot project became a DOE Headquarters-based program in 1990.

Who is responsible for monitoring the health of current DOE workers?

DOE has the legislative authority to monitor the impact of its operations on the health of its work force. The Office of Illness and Injury Prevention Programs at DOE Headquarters manages the Illness and Injury Surveillance

Program. The program directly funds occupational medicine departments at participating sites to collect selected health data used to monitor worker health.

The staff of the Illness and Injury Surveillance Program has advanced graduate degrees from accredited Schools of Public Health at respected United States universities. They are experienced and dedicated health professionals who are committed to worker health protection.

Who is covered by the Illness and Injury Surveillance Program?

Currently, the Illness and Injury Surveillance Program examines health trends among more than 79,000 workers at 13 participating DOE sites and facilities. Site participation is voluntary, and we invite site managers and other health professionals interested in implementing this program at their site to contact us.

Participating sites include:

- Brookhaven National Laboratory
- East Tennessee Technology Park
- Hanford Site
- Idaho National Laboratory
- Kansas City Plant
- Los Alamos National Laboratory
- Nevada Test Site
- Oak Ridge National Laboratory
- Pantex Plant
- Sandia National Laboratories
- Savannah River Site
- Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
- Y-12 National Security Complex

What kinds of health data are used?

Occupational medicine departments across the DOE complex routinely collect illness and injury data. When an employee does not report to work for 5 or more consecutive workdays, that employee should be cleared to return to work through the site occupational medicine department before returning to work (DOE Rule 10 CFR 851). Information on shorter term health-related absences is also available. Illness and injury data are linked to other occupational information, such as job title and participation in specialized exposure monitoring programs (e.g. lead exposure monitoring or respiratory protection). This information is collected, verified, and analyzed at the Illness and Injury Surveillance data center. The surveillance program staff closely reviews the data to identify unfavorable health trends or unusual health occurrences.

How are confidentiality and privacy protected?

DOE takes confidentiality issues concerning worker health very seriously. The information analyzed by the Illness and Injury Surveillance Program is not linked to any individual by name, Social Security number, or any other identifiable information. All identifiers remain in the site's Occupational Medicine Department. The results of our analyses are presented in summarized or grouped format.