



# ATOMIC HEALTH NEWS

FOR DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, ATOMIC WEAPONS  
EMPLOYEES & URANIUM WORKERS

## What's in a White Card?

Discover all that the white card covers and  
how to maximize your benefits!

## Atomic Site Feature

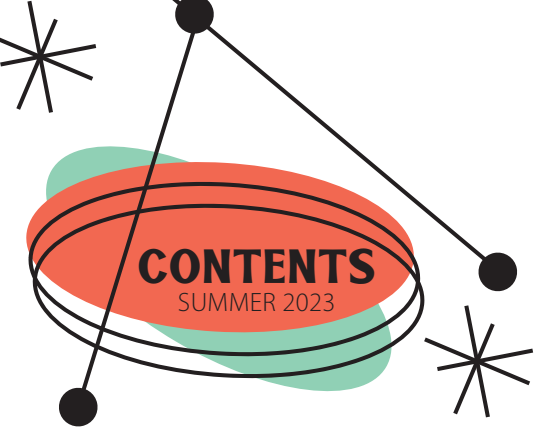
Rocky Flats Manufacturing Complex  
Denver, Colorado

## Meet Herman

A former Rocky Flats worker shares his  
memories of working in the atomic industry

— Larry, Former  
Uranium Worker  
& Nuclear Care  
Partners Patient



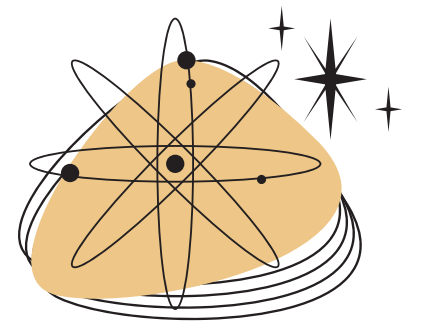


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Special thank you to the community partners united with us in our mission

FORMER ATOMIC WORKERS

WE WANT TO FEATURE YOU IN OUR 2024 ATOMIC HEROES CALENDAR!

Every year, we create a custom-curated Atomic Heroes Calendar to honor our nation's former atomic workers.

WHAT WE ARE LOOKING FOR:

- \* **Photos** of you (current or past - from your time working at the site)
- \* **Stories** about your time in the atomic industry
- \* **Fun facts** about the site you worked at, your job, etc.

IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT SUBMITTING PHOTOS OR DRAWINGS, PLEASE GIVE US A CALL AT 800.295.5846



HEY KIDS!

This year, we also want to feature drawings from your kids, grandkids, or great-grandkids.

DRAWING IDEAS:

- \* Recreate a photo of your loved one who worked in the atomic industry
- \* Draw a photo of your loved one, capturing their essence as an atomic hero
- \* Create a drawing of something iconic in the atomic industry (bomb testing smoke plume, recreate old Cold War propaganda posters, draw a local atomic site, etc.)

TO SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS OR DRAWINGS

Visit [NuclearCarePartners.com/atomic-heroes-calendar](https://NuclearCarePartners.com/atomic-heroes-calendar)

OR SCAN THE QR CODE







**Meet Herman**  
Former Rocky Flats Handyman, Assembler  
& Skilled Carpenter

## BACKGROUND AND WORK HISTORY

Herman, a Colorado native originally from Rocky Ford, CO, was just 18 years old when he applied to work at Rocky Flats. "Everyone wanted to work there! It was good pay, good benefits, and since it was a government job, it meant job security," Herman says, "But everyone wanted to work there, so you just had to keep applying and applying until you got a call back." In 1982, after sending in multiple applications, it finally happened for Herman and **he began his 23-year-long career at Rocky Flats.**

"For the first six months, I was a handyman," says Herman. "But for a decade of my time at Rocky Flats, I was an assembler." While uncommonly reported by former workers at other atomic sites, Herman mentions that workers at Rocky Flats were not only encouraged to wear proper protective clothing, it was strictly enforced. "Rocky Flats housed one of the most contaminated rooms in the U.S.— the Infinity Room. They absolutely took personal protective equipment (PPE) seriously. I remember when I would come into work, the first thing we would do is change out of our street clothes and into our coveralls. Then I would grab a respirator and begin my day."

Herman remembers a very tragic incident in 1987 that led to the death of a fellow co-worker and electrician. "After that happened, more DOE personnel were placed around the plant and PPE was taken even more seriously than they already were."

As an assembler, Herman would spend his days in the build room assembling and disassembling pits and trigger mechanisms that would eventually be used for the successful detonation of nuclear weapons. Layer by layer, the trigger would be passed through an airlock where it would be welded, inspected, then passed back to assembly for further construction. **At peak production, Rocky Flats shipped out nearly 200 triggers**, where counter-site, Los Alamos National Lab, would ship out around a dozen.

After 10 years as an assembler, Herman went on to be a Chemical Operator, Metallurgical Operator, and finally a DnD (Destruct and Dismantle) Skilled Carpenter where he would hold his last title at the site. The announcement of a site-wide, multi-billion dollar clean up effort was announced in 1992, regrettably leaving thousands of workers out of a job after clean up concluded. Unfortunately, Herman, along with 750 other employees were ineligible for retirement as they did not meet the work duration and age requirements.

## DIAGNOSIS

Following a small heart attack, Herman's doctor took an x-ray of his chest. This was the first time his Atelectasis\* (collapse of the lung) had been identified. After talking to his doctor, Herman learned that his diagnosis could be directly correlated to his time at Rocky Flats and the inhalation of plutonium oxide. **"This illness has taken away the vitality of that part of my life— mowing my lawn, doing yard work, walking up stairs, everything. I'm either huffing and puffing, or have to take frequent breaks because after a certain amount of time, it's hard for me to breathe,"** says Herman. **"But it was for a great cause—the freedom of our country."**

## FINDING NUCLEAR CARE PARTNERS

After multiple conversations with his doctor, and a formal diagnosis of Atelectasis as a result from working at Rocky Flats, Herman sought after the EEOICPA benefits available to him. He self-filed his claim with the DOL and received his benefits white card. The next step was to find the perfect company to help him manage his illness. Herman knew he wanted a company that carried a high level of professionalism, had extensive knowledge of who they were helping, and employed nurses with genuine compassion for their patients.

"I met a representative of Nuclear Care Partners at a social event for former atomic workers, they offered to come to my house and tell me everything about them and how they can help me. That's what sold me." Herman signed up for services provided by Nuclear Care Partners in December of 2017 and still today looks forward to his weekly nurse visits.



**I try not to let my illness stop me!**  
**My nurses are always helpful, so kind, supportive, and knowledgeable in what they are doing. They take good care of me and check that everything is going well. I am so thankful to have them!**



**In loving memory of Steven**  
LOYAL BROTHER & ROCKY FLATS RETIREE

## WHAT IS ATELECTASIS?

Atelectasis (at-uh-LEK-tuh-sis) is a complete or partial collapse of the entire lung or area (lobe) of the lung. It occurs when the tiny air sacs (alveoli) within the lung become deflated or possibly filled with alveolar fluid.

### Symptoms of Atelectasis

There may be no obvious signs or symptoms of atelectasis. If you do have signs and symptoms, they may include:

- Difficulty breathing
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Wheezing
- Cough

Source: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/atelectasis/symptoms-causes/syc-20369684>



# What's in a White Card?

As a former atomic worker, you may already have or have heard of the Department of Labor (DOL) White Card — a medical benefits card that can cover costs associated with your approved illness as a result of your workplace exposure.

This card is issued under the Energy Employees Occupational Illness Compensation Program Act (EEOICPA) which was first enacted to provide atomic retirees necessary medical interventions and compensation. To date, over \$8 billion has been paid out to former atomic workers to assist in combating their illnesses.

While no dollar amount will ever be able to repay these brave men and women for the sacrifices they made while serving in our nuclear weapons complex, the DOL white card serves as a lifeline for those who continue to courageously fight their subsequent health battles.

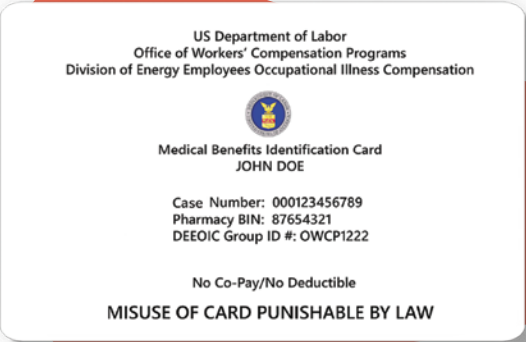


## WHAT CAN YOUR WHITE CARD COVER?

A DOL White Medical Benefits Card can cover costs associated with your approved illness including:

- ✓ Doctor's Visits & Copays
- ✓ Prescribed Medications
- ✓ Durable Medical Equipment (DME)
  - CPAP Machines
  - Nebulizers
  - Oxygen Machines
  - And more
- ✓ Diagnostic Laboratory & Radiological Testing
- ✓ In-Home Health Care
- ✓ Skilled Nursing Care
  - Wound care
  - Ostomy care
  - Medication management.
- ✓ Medical Treatments
- ✓ Reimbursement for out-of-pocket medical expenses for your approved illness
- ✓ And Much More!

You may qualify for up to **\$400,000** in financial compensation and **no-cost** medical benefits!



DETERMINE YOUR WHITE CARD BENEFIT ELIGIBILITY  
CALL US AT 800.295.5846

Visit [NuclearCarePartners.com/do-you-qualify](https://NuclearCarePartners.com/do-you-qualify)  
OR SCAN THE QR CODE



— Charles, Former Savannah River Site Worker & Nuclear Care Partners Patient

## ALREADY HAVE YOUR WHITE CARD? DISCOVER THE ADVANTAGE OF MAXIMIZING YOUR COVERAGE!

We believe care goes far beyond the home and will go the extra mile to help you get the most out of your white card benefits:

- ▢ Monitoring & helping you add consequential illnesses to your card
- ▢ Tracking your eligibility for impairment ratings
- ▢ Assisting you with reimbursements for out-of-pocket expenses
- ▢ Educating you and your family about your EEOICPA benefits
- ▢ Advocating for you and your health needs with your physician(s)
- ▢ Requesting durable medical equipment (DME)
- ▢ Finding medical vendors that will accept your white card (including physicians, pharmacies, DME vendors & more)
- ▢ Providing you with the highest quality of in-home care
- ▢ Giving you a voice in your care and putting you in the driver's seat

We can serve as your guide and connect you to benefits resources.



WE'D LOVE TO CHECK ALL OF THESE BOXES FOR YOU!  
800.295.5846





# A Guide to Consequential Conditions

By: Albert B. Frowiss Sr, Independent Claims Advocate



## WHAT IS A CONSEQUENTIAL CONDITION?

To understand what a consequential condition is, we must first define that “primary” medical conditions are those which are proven to be caused by occupational toxic exposures.

The “secondary” or “consequential” conditions are conditions that can be medically linked to or caused by the primary accepted condition. You cannot file a claim for a consequential illness unless a claim has been approved for the primary illness covered under Part B or Part E of the Program.



## CONSEQUENTIAL

### Illness or injury caused by Surgery, Chemo, Radiation, Other Therapies & Medications

These treatment procedures cause most secondary or consequential medical conditions.

### Metastasis

The spread of a primary cancer to another organ is called metastasis. One is a consequence of the other.

### Accidental Injury

### Psychological

Such conditions can arise as a consequence of the accepted illness and/or treatment of that condition. They can arise with no physiological basis.

## WHAT IS NEEDED TO FILE

This type of consequential is where we need the most help from the licensed physician.

***The physician (MD or DO) must document the relationship that creates the link between the consequential condition and the accepted work-related illness—articulating the physiology of how surgeries, therapies, or medications for treating the primary have caused the secondary.***

Metastases are usually the easiest to justify and are most often diagnosed with imaging by radiologists. If the radiology includes the phrase “consistent with” metastasis to a specific location, then that is acceptable proof to examiners.

A claimant accident, such as a trip or fall, related to the condition, which results in an injury can be a consequential condition that is generally easy to justify. A physician’s documentation of cause (primary accepted illness) and effect (unsteady gait lead to fall, for example).

Depression, anxiety, and/or chemical imbalance are examples of psychological conditions that may have no physiological basis. Requires a mental health professional and generally not ratable for impairment

## ADDITIONALLY, WHAT IS NEEDED TO FILE A CONSEQUENTIAL CLAIM:

For all consequential claims, you also need

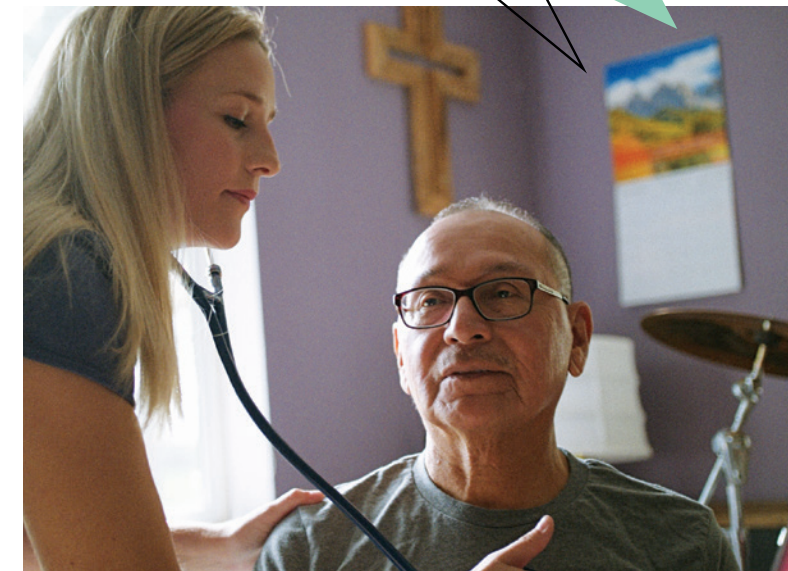
- \* The diagnostic proof of the consequential condition
- \* The ICD billing code for it (*Obtained by the physician/clinic staff*)
- \* And the date of initial diagnosis of the consequential condition

Most importantly we need the compelling objective medical rationale by the physician which connects the dots of causation, the linkage of one to the other. The medical evidence must include a physician’s opinion that presents a convincing and well-rationalized conclusion linking the consequential condition to a previously accepted illness. The physician must conclude that it is at least as likely as not that one is the cause of the other.

It is also extremely helpful for the physician to cite and include corroborative, on-point medical journal articles backing the physician’s own opinion.

### Examples of Treatments causing Injuries or Other Illnesses or Side Effects include:

1. Organ or nerve damage, pain, neuropathy, dry mouth, dental damage, swallowing, digestive issues, due to radiation treatment;
2. Chemotherapy causing neuropathy in extremities, altered gait, sensory ataxia (balance), cardiomyopathy, AFIB, chemo-brain, and cognitive dysfunction.
3. Aromatase inhibitors or other steroids, like Prednisone, causing osteoporosis, pathogenic fractures, itching, pruritis, and dyspareunia.
4. Chemotherapy causing fatigue, loss of vision, tinnitus, and loss of hair.
5. Compromised immune system resulting in COVID-19, cellulitis, MRSA
6. Surgery causing scarring, disfigurement, hernia, digestive blockage, lymphedema,
7. Organ removal causing diabetes onset, inability to ambulate, speak, eat, do ADLs



Former Hanford Worker & Nuclear Care Partners Patient

## SPECIAL NOTE ON COVID-19 CONSEQUENTIAL CLAIMS:

*Stated in Federal (EEOICPA) Procedure Manual Appendix 1 - Exhibit pg 469*

This presumption allows for the acceptance of physician diagnosed COVID-19 as a consequential illness to a primary Part B occupational illness or Part E covered illness. Based on a list of underlying medical conditions that increase a person’s risk of severe illness from COVID-19, compiled by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DEEOIC accepts that COVID-19 is a consequence of any chronic health condition or risk factor that is identified by the CDC as being associated with severe COVID-19 disease when it follows or coincides with the onset of those conditions.

**Albert B. Frowiss, Sr., is a non-attorney claims advocate, past 16 years, with 5,000+ cases approved.**

**858.756.1494**

**frowiss@frowiss.org**

P.O. Box 909, Rancho Santa Fe, CA 92067

*The fee is zero or 2% if the award is paid. NEVER a higher fee.*



# "The Father of the Atomic Bomb"

## ABOUT J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER



J. Robert Oppenheimer (1904 - 1967) was an American theoretical physicist and lecturer. In 1942, when the Manhattan Project launched, General Leslie Groves appointed Oppenheimer as the director of the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL). With his brilliant mind and dedication to the country, he was dubbed the "Father of the Atomic Bomb."

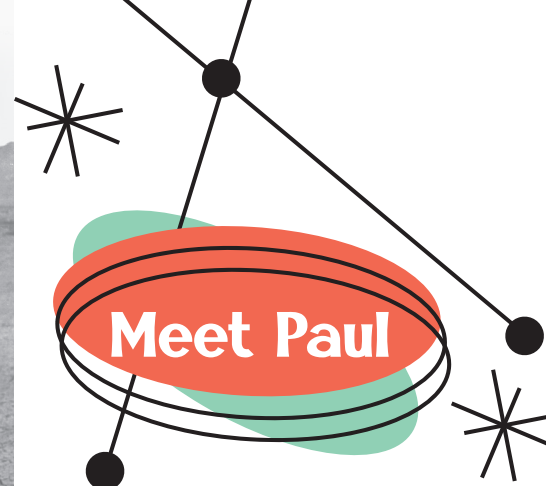
Under Oppenheimer's guidance, the laboratories at Los Alamos were constructed and brought together some of the best minds in physics with the sole purpose to design and build an atomic bomb. General Groves' decision to select Oppenheimer as director was validated when less than three years later, on July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1945, The Trinity Test was successfully conducted, confirming years of work and research to be victorious. In August of that same year, two atomic bombs were dropped over Japan.

After the war ended Oppenheimer became an advisor of the Atomic Energy Commission, lobbying for international arms control.

In 1960, Oppenheimer, along with Albert Einstein, Bertrand Russell, and Joseph Rotblat established the World Academy of Art and Science. He continued lecturing around the world until 1965 when he was diagnosed with throat cancer. After unsuccessful surgery and radiation treatment, Oppenheimer passed away in 1967 leaving his wife Katherine to two adult children behind.



*In September 1945, many participants returned to the Trinity Test site for news crews. Here Oppenheimer and Groves examine the remains of one the bases of the steel test tower.*



### AN ACTOR IN THE FILM!

Not only is Paul a former atomic worker himself, he is also an actor! Paul was cast as Texas Senator Ralph Yarborough in the upcoming Oppenheimer film. We had the pleasure of speaking with Paul about his experience on set.

#### You played senator Ralph Yarborough, did you know much about him or his time in office prior to the movie?

The scene in which I played Senator Yarborough was a senate committee hearing. In 1959, Lewis Strauss, chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission, had been appointed by President Eisenhower to be Secretary of Commerce. In the scene, I played one of the 9 U.S. Senators that were on that committee. I really didn't know much at all about the character. In fact, until that very scene, I didn't even know who I was going to be playing, other than some senator. I looked down at the nameplate, and that's when I found out who I was going to be playing in the film.



#### Did you believe in the choices and votes that Senator Yarborough made during his time in office?

Yes, I do. This historic testimony was truly the beginning of when Lewis Strauss was starting to be recognized as a

villain for revoking Oppenheimer's Security Clearance. The scientific community was very supportive of Oppenheimer, and they knew this was critical.



#### Do you have a background in acting, and if not, what inspired you to want to be involved with this film?

I do not have a background in acting. When I first heard about the film, it was called Gadget, and I knew it was going to be produced by Christopher Nolan. I assumed it was going to be about the nuclear weapons program, so I contacted the film office to inquire about being a film advisor and historical contact if any part of the movie was going to be about the pacific proving grounds. They told me they wouldn't be touching on that, but asked me if I would be interested in playing a role as a senator. I said "Heck yeah, I can do that!"

#### When and where was the movie filmed?

The movie began production at the end of 2021 and went through 2022. It was filmed in many locations as they went through Oppenheimer's youthful years and through his life, however predominantly it was filmed in Los Alamos, New Mexico.

#### Have you seen the movie yet?

I have not seen the movie yet. When it comes out, I am hoping I can take my daughter and head to Los Alamos to see it.

## Oppenheimer The Movie

### KEEP AN EYE OUT!

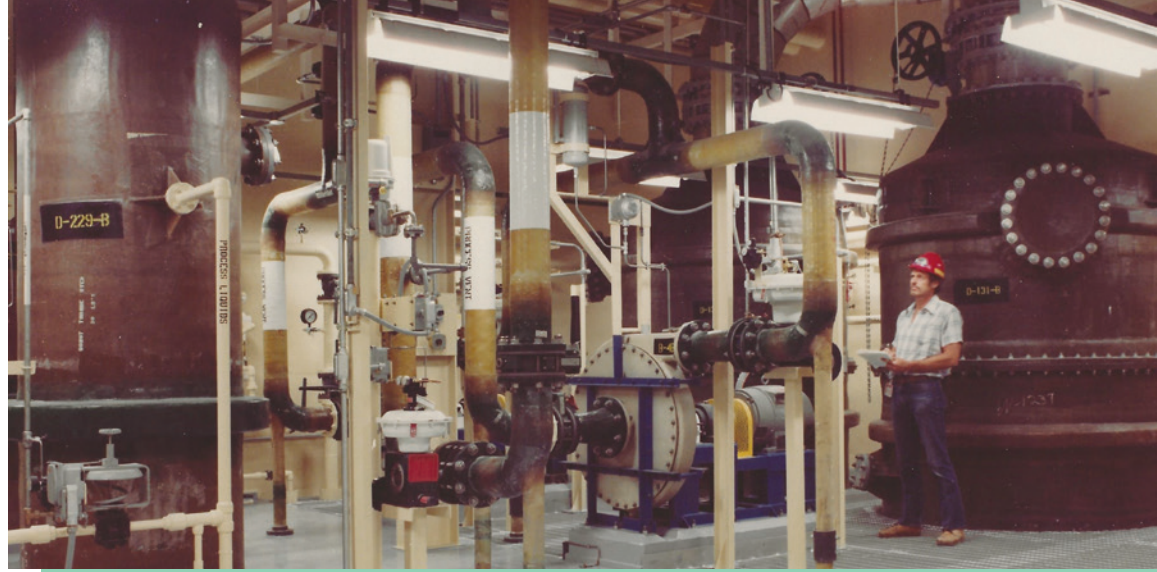
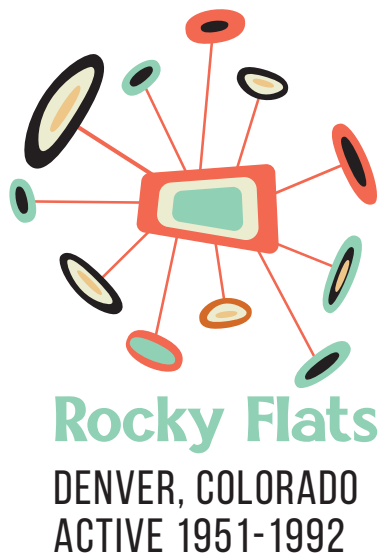
Nuclear Care Partners is excited to be celebrating the Oppenheimer film in a variety of ways this summer including **special giveaways, events, and more**, so be sure to stay tuned!

#### The film, Oppenheimer, will make its nationwide premiere on July 21<sup>st</sup>, 2023.

Based on the 2005 novel, American Prometheus: The Triumph and Tragedy of J. Robert Oppenheimer by Kai Bird and Martin J. Sherwin, 'Oppenheimer' follows the life of the Father of the Atomic Bomb as the Director of the Los Alamos National Lab during the Manhattan Project. Starring Cillian Murphy, the film depicts the story of American theoretical physicist, J. Robert Oppenheimer, and his role in the development of the atomic bomb. The film is written and directed by Christopher Nolan, and features a star-studded cast including Emily Blunt, Robert Downey Jr., Matt Damon, and more.

Nuclear Care Partners is looking forward to seeing the atomic industry and the men and women who worked in the nuclear weapons complex be featured and honored as an important part of our nation's history through this film. For more information about showings near you, we encourage you to contact your local movie theater.





Although the grounds look much different today, The Rocky Flats Plant once spanned over 6,500 acres and comprised over 800 structures including permanent buildings, trailers, temporary structures, sheds, and tanks.

The Rocky Flats Plant, located 16 miles northwest of Denver, Colorado, was a manufacturing complex founded in 1951 to produce nuclear weapons parts for America's nuclear arsenal. Rocky Flats, like many other atomic sites across the country, was part of the nationwide nuclear weapons complex that manufactured nuclear weapons components under the jurisdiction of the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) now, the Department of Energy (DOE).

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO NUCLEAR WEAPONS COMPLEX

During its operations, Rocky Flats produced plutonium triggers (the splitting of a nucleus of an atom of heavy elements, such as uranium and plutonium) which were essential to ensure a successful detonation. Although specific weapons containing nuclear triggers still remain classified, it's known that triggers built at Rocky Flats were used in a variety of weapons and were formed from elements such as beryllium, plutonium, stainless steel, uranium, and other materials.

The successful operation of the Rocky Flats Plant was instrumental in the Cold War and ultimately helped secure U.S. victory, granting freedom and security for citizens across the United States.

While the legacy of Rocky Flats is complex, it serves as a reminder of the dangers posed by nuclear weapons production and a testament to the contributions these brave workers made to national security.

## ATOMIC HEROES

Along with exposure to toxic chemicals, radioactive materials, and radiation, workers were subjected to high-stress situations due to security procedures and the nature of working with hazardous industrial equipment. In addition, workers were often not provided with adequate safety equipment, which compounded the dangers of their jobs. Today, those who built their career at Rocky Flats face numerous health complications including cancer, lung diseases, chronic illnesses and other challenges due to workplace exposure.

Several safety incidents occurred at the site, including major fires in 1957 and 1969, which released radioactive materials into the surrounding area. Other incidents included leaks and spills of radioactive materials and safety violations that put employees and the surrounding communities at risk. These incidents caused much concern and led to increased scrutiny of the site's operations, although the extent of the health risks was not fully understood until much later.



— Photos courtesy of Chuck, Former Rocky Flats Worker and Nuclear Care Partners Patient

## PRESENT DAY

Today, Rocky Flats is now a National Wildlife Refuge, and in many ways, its transformation from a nuclear facility to an ecological preserve has been a success story. In 1989, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) declared the site a Superfund Site due to high contamination levels. In 2005, a ten-year, multimillion-dollar accelerated cleanup project was completed by the Department of Energy (DOE) and its contractors.

As part of the cleanup process, over 1.7 million cubic yards of contaminated soil and debris were removed from the site and disposed of safely and securely. Additionally, a 30-year maintenance period is currently underway.

The DOE Office of Legacy Management (LM) is responsible for long-term surveillance and maintenance of approximately 1,300 acres of the Rocky Flats land. LM is also responsible for approximately 200 acres of former buffer zone land, which is now associated with an active gravel mine and will be transferred to the Department of Interior as mining permits expire.

The future of Rocky Flats is still being determined and there are a number of proposals for the site. One involves establishing a museum or educational center on-site to give historical insight and to maintain the significant legacy of the Rocky Flats Plant. Another proposition is to use the existing infrastructure for alternative energy production, such as wind or solar power. Some groups have also suggested designating the site as a national park to further protect and preserve the wildlife habitat and open space.

However, with concerns about lingering contamination, which may limit future uses, ongoing monitoring will be needed to ensure the site remains safe for the public and the environment.

Regardless of what becomes of the Rocky Flats Plant, it is important to recognize the selfless contributions of the atomic heroes who worked there. While most of the plant's activity was covered in secrecy and danger, the production of plutonium triggers at Rocky Flats played a significant role in ensuring U.S. victory during the Cold War.

Rocky Flats stands as a reminder of the sacrifice of those who worked at the site and the environmental costs of nuclear weapons production, as well as the importance of environmental stewardship and continued monitoring of legacy contamination.

Nuclear Care Partners proudly provides care to former Rocky Flats workers who sacrificed their health for the security and safety of our nation.

*If you worked at Rocky Flats and have been diagnosed with cancer or a chronic illness, contact us to see how we can help you with your EEOICPA benefits & any needed in-home care!*

## TIMELINE OF ROCKY FLATS

- 1951: AEC acquired land Northwest of Denver, Colorado for Rocky Flats Plant
- 1952: Operations began
- 1972: Congress approves 4,600-acre Buffer Zone around Rocky Flats
- 1995: Rocky Flats is deemed "The Atomic Plant"
- 1989: FBI and EPA "raided" the Rocky Flats Plant to investigate allegations of environmental crimes
- 1992: Production at Rocky Flats was terminated due to the end of the Cold War
- 1995: DOE bidded and estimated cleanup of over \$37 billion
- 2005: DOE and its contractors complete cleanup of chemical and radiological contamination on an accelerated timeline and at a cost of just \$7 billion
- 2007: A large portion of the land was transferred to the US Fish and Wildlife Service

## EEOICPA STATISTICS FOR ROCKY FLATS AS OF 5/12/23

- ✱ 13,209 Total EEOICPA Claims Filed
- ✱ 5,599 Unique Individual Workers who have Filed
- ✱ \$931,255,908 Total Compensation & Medical Bills Paid

**Denver Resource Center**  
8758 Wolff Court, Suite 101  
Westminster, CO 80031  
(720) 540-4977  
Toll Free: (866) 540-4977  
Fax: (720) 540-4976

**Sources:**  
coloradoencyclopedia.org  
britannica.com  
energy.gov  
npr.org  
fws.gov  
cumulis.epa.gov  
Lm.doe.gov  
Rockyflatshistory.org



# Get to Know Our Clinical & Growth Directors

Meet the Faces behind the Team Helping Support Our Patients' Quality Care & the Expansion of Our Mission

## REGIONAL DIRECTORS

Our Regional Directors help further our mission by leading our clinical teams across the country. Their roles focus on supporting the clinical leaders within our organization, creating harmonious, highly-skilled clinical teams who provide quality care to our precious patients.



**KATIE GOFF, RN**

Regional Director  
Joined NCP in 2016

**STACY TODD, RN**

Regional Director  
Joined NCP in 2016



## REGIONAL OUTREACH DIRECTORS

Our Regional Outreach Directors support the expansion of our mission by leading our teams who are out in the field spreading the word to former atomic workers about their benefits and guiding them through the journey to receiving these much-deserved benefits and care.



**AMY AUSTIN**

Regional Outreach Director  
Joined NCP in 2014

**CALLEY MALLOY**

Regional Outreach Director  
Joined NCP in 2022



## WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE?

"The most rewarding part of my job is being a part of helping our national teams touch so many patient lives through their own personal development and growth of their branches."

"I'm so grateful to be able to be a part of helping our leaders grow and evolve into the best versions of themselves, all in pursuit of our common mission."

## HOW HAS THE COMPANY'S MISSION IMPACTED YOU?

"This mission has impacted my life so much so that I can't imagine not being a part of such a great organization that continues to impact lives. We have such great employees that take our mission and values into homes across the country each and everyday. Knowing that we get to make a difference in so many lives (patients and team members) makes me grateful each and every day."

"In my journey with Nuclear Care Partners, I have been able to see our work touch not only the lives of our patients but our patients' families. It's a privilege to get to leave lasting impressions, caring for these heroes and giving the opportunity for their families to focus on just that—being a family and not having to worry about their loved one's care."

## WHAT IS THE MOST REWARDING ASPECT OF YOUR ROLE?

"The most rewarding aspect of my role is seeing the lives directly impacted by our teams. Getting to hear about and meet the men and women who now get to live a quality life because they have trusted us to be a part of their lives is humbling. It is so special getting to see a team member light up when a patient tells them about what a difference they have made in his or her life."

"Meeting with the former atomic workers, the atomic heroes of our nation, has been the most rewarding part of the job for me. Hearing their heroic stories and now being able to provide quality care for them as they age is such an honor."

## HOW HAS THE COMPANY'S MISSION IMPACTED YOU?

"Nuclear Care Partners' mission has impacted me immensely as it is my why and my driver for showing up each and every day and being my best for our employees and patients. Being a part of this amazing mission is having the opportunity to give back to those who have sacrificed so selflessly for us to be here today."

"Working with people who love what they do and have been doing it for such a long time is so rewarding. I've worked for other healthcare agencies and Nuclear Care Partners is different. The employees here are 100% invested in the mission, in the quality of their care and in doing the right thing even when no one is looking."



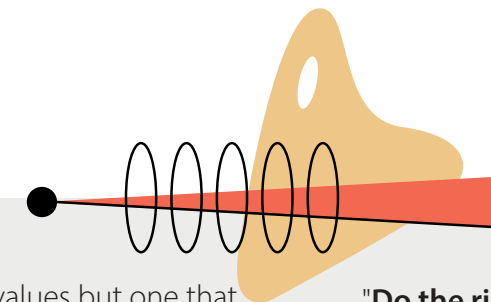
## WHICH CORE VALUE DO YOU CONNECT WITH MOST?

"It is hard to pick just one core value that resonates with me most as I truly feel that each of our core values align with my own personal values and each of them are important. However, I do feel that **being kind** is so important with each and every interaction that we have."

"The value of **making connections** really resonates with me. Connecting not only with our clinical leaders, but with our patients and staff. In my opinion, the connections shared between our patients and staff set us apart from other companies in the industry. We connect on a deeper level and treat our patients like family."

"I am so thankful for all of our core values but one that resonates with me the most is **making connections** as I believe there is such power in being genuine and authentically connecting with one another. The connections we make are what make us family to our patients and to one another."

"**Do the right thing.** This goes back to people providing great quality care when no one is looking. Healthcare can be a scary thing to navigate and the teams here are consistently doing the right thing in all aspects of their role. We owe it to our deserving patients to be so deeply committed to doing the right thing."





# Ask the Experts: Pneumoconiosis

## DIAGNOSIS EDUCATION, SYMPTOMS & TREATMENT

Written by Angela VanOrder, RN & Iowa, Missouri, Kansas, and Texas Clinical Director

### Did You Know that Pneumoconiosis is one of the Most Common Occupational Diseases?

Oftentimes, pneumoconiosis is confused with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), asthma, chronic bronchitis, or other pulmonary diseases. Many former atomic workers were unknowingly exposed to dust and substances without the proper protection during their employment and are now suffering from this disease. We are here to help you understand the difference between COPD and pneumoconiosis, the primary types of pneumoconiosis, what symptoms to look for, and the diagnosis and treatment options for this disease.

## PNEUMOCONIOSIS VS COPD

**Pneumoconiosis is associated with the inhalation of mineral or organic dust and poor personal protection, as many of our former workers have experienced in their work history. The destruction of the pulmonary parenchyma and the upper airway is progressive and irreversible throughout the disease.**

**COPD is caused primarily by smoking as the #1 factor, air pollution, and chemicals. COPD is an obstructive disease, whereas Pneumoconiosis can be obstructive and restrictive as the damage causes the loss of blood vessels and air sacs in your lungs.**

Pneumoconiosis may play a role in the development of COPD, and the complication of COPD may worsen the disease process, as well as increase the difficulty in treating this chronic illness. Pneumoconiosis patients with COPD as a secondary condition often have more severe respiratory symptoms than those without the complication of COPD.

### The Primary Types of Pneumoconiosis

- Asbestosis – caused by inhaling asbestos fibers.
- Silicosis – caused by inhaling silica dust.
- Coal workers' pneumoconiosis (commonly referred to as CWP or black lung) – caused by inhaling coal mine dust.

### Signs & Symptoms

Common signs and symptoms of pneumoconiosis:

- Persistent or productive cough
- Shortness of breath (*at rest and exertion*)
- Chest tightness
- Chronic generalized weakness
- Fatigue, needing rest periods throughout the day

If you are experiencing any of these symptoms you should seek advice from your medical provider to determine the cause as it may be linked to your workplace exposure and you may be eligible to file a claim under the EEOICPA.

### Diagnosis & Treatment

If are experiencing any of the above symptoms and you have been exposed to substances and chemicals in the workplace, your doctor may prescribe a variety of diagnostic tests and tools including:

- A chest x-ray
- A pulmonary function test - to diagnose and discover the severity of the lung disease
- A 6-minute walking test - to assess the need for oxygen and lung capacity
- A CT scan

— Bill, Former Atomic Worker



### Treatment

While pneumoconiosis cannot be cured, once the disease has been diagnosed, treatment is aimed at preventing the illness from worsening and controlling your symptoms. There are many things that can help with managing the disease:

- Quitting smoking if you are a smoker is the most effective treatment to start.
- Avoiding all dust exposure is also very important.
- Your doctor may order oxygen 24/7 or just at night for some patients, as well as prescribe an inhaled medication such as a bronchodilator or corticosteroid.
  - Bronchodilators open up your airways if you have trouble breathing, while corticosteroids can curb airway inflammation.

**Your doctor will determine the right treatment options for you.**

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— Terry, Former Atomic Worker



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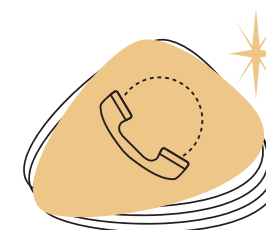
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# Nationwide Resources for Former Atomic Workers

We are incredibly grateful for our community partners who have locked arms with us in our mission to serve former atomic workers. While not a comprehensive list, we invite you to check out the following Department of Labor white card-friendly resources who have supported this edition of Atomic Health News.

Be sure to connect with your local Nuclear Care Partners team to learn more about resources in your area, as we continue to expand this network of resources.

To all of our community partners,  
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in serving our nation's Atomic Heroes!

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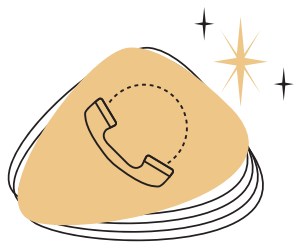
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