

NUCLEAR WEAPONS PRODUCTION FACILITIES

VITAL STATISTICS

PROBLEMS & ACCIDENTS*

OAK RIDGE NATIONAL
LABORATORY
Y-12 PLANT
Oak Ridge, TN
■ assembles 2nd stage of
bomb; produces lithium;
converts uranium to metal;
processes beryllium

■ contractor: Martin Marietta
Energy Systems
■ 7,000 employees
■ less than one mile from the
town of Scarboro

The plant has polluted streams with mercury. A pond at the plant containing arsenic, boron and sulfate is leaking into surface streams. Area crops and livestock are contaminated by atmospheric releases.

GASEOUS DIFFUSION PLANT
■ enriches uranium

■ 2,500 employees
■ 15 miles west of Knoxville;
28,000 people/8 mile radius
■ Plant closed.

1975: A cylinder containing uranium hexafluoride ruptured, releasing its contents. This chemical forms deadly hydrofluoric acid when in contact with air.
1981: Accidental nuclear chain reaction was nearly initiated.

PADUCAH GASEOUS DIFFU-
SION PLANT
Paducah, KY
■ enriches uranium

■ contractor: Martin Marietta
Energy Systems
■ 1,300 employees
■ 500,000 people/ 50 mile
radius

1983: 3 lbs. of uranium released.
1984: 4.5 lbs. of uranium were accidentally released into a drain with 1200 gallons of decontamination solution.

PANTEX FACILITY
Amarillo, TX
■ final assembly for
nuclear warheads

■ contractor: Mason & Hanger
- Silas Mason Company, Inc.
■ 2,800 employees
■ 280,000 people/ 50 mile
radius

Thousands of gallons of toxics solvents from the plant were discharged into a giant unlined waste pit from 1954 to 1980. The chemicals are believed to be leaking into the Ogallala Aquifer, the primary water supply for Amarillo, Texas.

PINELLAS PLANT
Largo, FL
■ manufactures neutron
generators

■ contractor: General Electric
■ 1,926 employees

Underground storage tanks containing chemical compounds are believed to be leaking.

PORTSMOUTH URANIUM
ENRICHMENT COMPLEX
Piketon, OH
■ enriches uranium

■ contractor: Martin Marietta
Energy Systems
■ 2,100 employees
■ 600,000 people/ 50 mile
radius

As of 1988, roughly 36 lbs. of cancer causing and toxic hexavalent chromium used in the process of enriching uranium for reactor fuel, is being released to the atmosphere daily through the plant's cooling tower.
1973: a "near critical" event (self-sustaining nuclear chain reaction).
1978: 21,000 lbs. of uranium hexafluoride released.
1986: 109 lbs. of uranium escaped from a vent.

ROCKY FLATS PLANT
Golden, CO
■ assembles plutonium
trigger of bomb; proc-
esses plutonium for weap-
ons

■ contractor: Rockwell Interna-
tional Corporation
■ 5,600 employees
■ 300,000 people/ 10 mile
radius
■ 9/88: Building 771 shutdown
(reprocessing building essential
to all activities at Rocky Flats).

The plant is leaking volatile, cancer-causing organic chemicals into underground water north of Denver. Soil around the site is contaminated with plutonium at elevated levels.
There have been over 200 fires at the plant.
1957: a major fire at the plutonium production building released tens of thousands of millicuries of alpha radiation into the atmosphere. Estimates of released contamination are difficult to determine because smokestack monitors and filtration systems were destroyed by explosions.

SANDIA NATIONAL
LABORATORIES
Albuquerque, NM
■ R&D; coordinates trans-
portation among nuclear
weapons facilities

■ contractor: Sandia Corpora-
tion (AT&T)
■ 8,800 employees
■ Albuquerque has a popula-
tion of 330,000.

Underground storage tanks have leaked. Open lagoons are receiving contaminated wastes and may be leaking.
Radioactive releases have been allowed in fusion research. Uranium-238 has been scattered as a result of explosive testing.

SAVANNAH RIVER PLANT
near Aiken, SC
■ produces tritium and
plutonium; recycles
uranium; extracts pluto-
nium from irradiated fuel

■ contractor: E.I. duPont de
Nemours & Company
■ 11,000 employees
■ 600,000 people/ 50 mile
radius
■ All reactors shutdown.
DOE has plans to reopen one
reactor and build another.

The plant has released millions of curies of tritium gas into the atmosphere from accidents. A primary aquifer in the area has been contaminated with solvents and seepage basins leaking cesium, strontium, and tritium.
There have been countless near critical reactor accidents.

* Unless otherwise noted, these estimates are based on preliminary studies and estimates by The Radioactive Waste Campaign, the Department of Energy and PSR physicians. This list is not thorough and is intended only to provide some examples of known problems that DOE facilities and area residents have experienced to date.
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