

P

HANFORD WORKS

G. E. NUCLEONICS PROJECT
GENERAL ELECTRIC
COMPANY

Files

REPOSITORY DoE Rec Hold Cont

COLLECTION R6 326

BOX No. 326-78-3 #2

FOLDER MHS 3-8 Monitoring Fallout
1953

Richland, Washington

February 18, 1949

Dr. Shields Warren
New England Deaconess Hospital
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Dr. Warren:

Mr. Parker has been advised that there is a revival of interest in the Life Insurance extra premium problem, and has asked me to give you some examples of the present system, which appears to require revision.

At the Hanford Works all personnel who spend more than 50% of their working time within the process area fences are required to pay some additional premium. The amount depends on the job classification of the individual.

The principal defects of this system are:

1. The process area fences are located by security requirements and have no relationship to radiation hazard, if any.
2. Almost all competent observers will concede that experimental work in atomic energy is inherently more dangerous than standardized production work. Yet such installations as the Argonne National Laboratory are not subject to extra premiums. The report of the Atomic Energy Commission's Safety and Industrial Health Advisory Board clearly indicates that safety practices and radiation protection are far superior at Hanford Works to the Argonne Laboratory.
3. Either the extra premiums are due to risk of radiation exposure or not. If they are, we submit:

We have picked at random a group of names of people who have applied for insurance since January 1, 1949, and been placed under some insurance code. All but one of these people have been placed in Code B 3 3, and one individual, who is a supervisor of technical control work, was classed A 1 1. Three of these people are in the Health Instrument Divisions, three are in the Technical Division, and one in an Operating Division. The radiation exposure record of each of these employees was reviewed for the year 1948 to determine the amount of radiation exposure they received. This listing is attached. The amount of radiation exposure that any of

COPY

Job #882

these employees received was so negligible that we do not feel any insurance code on the basis of special hazards is indicated or warranted. These exposures are typical of our general findings, which have been published in "Insurability of Atomic Energy Workers".

We have heard indirectly that the extra premiums are due to an alleged risk of "atomic" explosion. If this is the case, one might find a theoretical reason for such a risk in the Pile Areas. To maintain that this could happen in the Hanford Separation Plants is fatuous.

Moreover, if this is the reason for the premiums, the hypothetical risk would be equal for all inhabitants of the area, and the sliding scale from supervisors through operators to laborers would be inapplicable.

4. There are a few gross blunders, such as extra premium assignment to the Senior Supervisor - Meteorological. He is permanently located over 4,000 feet from the process areas. Thousands of other workers are closer than this, yet outside the defining process area fences.

Presumably such cases could be straightened out individually. Our main contention is that the present system bears no obvious relation to

1. the radiation hazard at different locations of the Hanford Works,
2. the radiation hazard of different classes of personnel at Hanford Works,
3. the radiation hazard at Hanford Works as compared with the Argonne National Laboratory and Brookhaven National Laboratory,
4. estimates of radiation hazard in comparison with all other causes of death. For example, the compensations of a good medical and general safety program at Hanford.

Sincerely yours,

/signed/

C. M. Patterson

C. M. Patterson,
Health Instrument Divisions

CMP:gb

PRIVACY ACT MATERIAL REMOVED

<u>Name</u>	<u>Duties</u>	<u>Pencils</u>	<u>Exposure*</u>		<u>Shiel</u>
			<u>Film</u>	<u>Open Window</u>	
	Ass't Chief Supervisor Technical Control	185	50		20
	Engineer, Health Instrument	115	430		90
	Technical Graduate, Technical (Metallurgist)	115	270		35
	Mechanical Engineer, Technical	40	-0-		-0-
	Technical Graduate, Health In- strument	270	265		125
	Operator, "S" Division (200 Area)	435	30		-0-
	Engineer, Health Instrument	245	365		17C

* Pencils - milliroentgens.
Shielded film - milliroentgens by gamma calibration.
Open Window film - millirep by beta calibration.

** Represents only 6 months (new employees).

PRIVACY ACT MATERIAL REMOVED

1191111