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Radioactive Fallout After Nuclear Explosions

Nuclear fallout is the residual radioactive material propelled into the upper atmosphere following a nuclear blast, so called because it "falls out" of the sky after the explosion and the shock wave has passed. It commonly refers to the radioactive dust and ash created when a nuclear weapon explodes. The amount and spread of fallout is a product of the size of the weapon and the altitude at which it is detonated.

Nuclear fallout - Wikipedia

To achieve successful solutions to the problems resulting from local, distant and global

radioactive fallout after nuclear explosions and accidents and to achieve successful retrospective analyses of the radiation conditions from recent observations, certain information is needed: the distribution of the exposure dose rate in the atmosphere and in a country; the distribution of radionuclides in natural environments and the nuclide composition of the radioactive fallout; the features of ...

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Radioactive Fallout after Nuclear Explosions and Accidents ...

Radioactive Fallout Fallout is the radioactive particles that fall to earth as a result of a nuclear explosion. It consists of weapon debris, fission products, and, in the case of a ground burst, radiated soil. Fallout particles vary in size from thousandths of a millimeter to several millimeters.

Radioactive Fallout - Atomic Archive

After a nuclear explosion, debris and soil can mix with radionuclides. This mixture is sent up into the air and then falls back to Earth. It is called fallout and it typically contains hundreds of different radionuclides. Since the conclusion of the weapons testing in the 1980s, radionuclides in the atmosphere have largely decayed away.

Radioactive Fallout From Nuclear Weapons Testing ¦ US EPA

The total radioactivity of the fission products is extremely large at first, but it falls off at a fairly rapid rate as a result of radioactive decay. Seven hours after a nuclear explosion, residual radioactivity will have decreased to about 10 percent of its amount at 1 hour, and after another 48 hours it will have decreased to 1 percent.

Nuclear weapon - Residual radiation and fallout ¦ Britannica

The next danger to avoid is radioactive fallout, a mixture of fission products (or radioisotopes) that a nuclear explosion creates by splitting atoms. The dangerous fallout zone (dark purple) shrinks quickly, while the much less dangerous hot zone (faint purple) grows for about 24 hours before shrinking back.

How to survive a nuclear explosion - We Are The Mighty

The head of one of the crew members of Daigo Fukuryū Maru showing radiation burns caused by fallout that collected in his hair; dated April 7, 1954, 38 days after the nuclear test Ninety minutes after the detonation, 23 crew members of the Japanese fishing boat the Daigo Fukuryū Maru ("Lucky Dragon No. 5") [30] were contaminated by the snow-like irradiated debris and ash.

Nuclear testing at Bikini Atoll - Wikipedia

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A mushroom cloud is a distinctive pyrocumulus mushroom-shaped cloud of debris, smoke and usually condensed water vapor resulting from a large explosion. The effect is most commonly associated with a nuclear explosion, but any sufficiently energetic detonation or deflagration will produce the same effect. They can be caused by powerful conventional weapons, like thermobaric weapons, including ...

Mushroom cloud - Wikipedia

Much of the destruction caused by a nuclear explosion is due to blast effects. Most buildings, except reinforced or blast-resistant structures, will suffer moderate damage when subjected to overpressures of only 35.5 kilopascals (kPa) (5.15 pounds-force per square inch or 0.35 atm). Data obtained from the Japanese surveys found that 8 psi (55 kPa) was sufficient to destroy all wooden and brick ...

Effects of nuclear explosions - Wikipedia

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Both the local and worldwide fallout hazards of nuclear explosions depend on a variety of interacting factors: weapon design, explosive force, altitude and latitude of detonation, time of year, and local weather conditions. All present nuclear weapon designs require the splitting of heavy elements like uranium and plutonium.

Radioactive Fallout ¦ Worldwide Effects of Nuclear War ...

A nuclear explosion may occur with or without a few minutes warning. Fallout is most dangerous in the first few hours after the detonation when it is giving off the highest levels of radiation. It takes time for fallout to arrive back to ground level, often more than 15 minutes for areas outside of the immediate blast damage zones.

Nuclear Explosion ¦ Ready.gov

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radioactive fallout after nuclear explosions and accidents and to achieve successful retrospective analyses of the radiation conditions from recent observations, certain information is needed: the distribution of the exposure dose rate in the atmosphere and in a country; the distribution of radionuclides in natural environments and the nuclide composition of the radioactive fallout; the features of formation of the aerosol particle-carriers of the radioactivity and of the nuclide distribution of the particles of different sizes formed under different conditions; the processes involved in the migration of radioactive products in different zones and environments; the external and internal effects of nuclear radiation on human beings. This monograph is devoted to a number of these problems, namely, to studies of the radioactive fallout composition, the formation of the aerosol particles that transport the radioactive products and to the analysis of the external radiation doses resulting from nuclear explosions and/or accidents. Problems of restoration and rehabilitation of contaminated land areas are also touched upon in the monograph. To solve such problems one requires knowledge of the mobility of radionuclides, an understanding of their uptake by plants, their transportation within the food chain and finally their uptake by animal and/or human organisms. The results of many years of study of radioactive fallout from atmospheric and underground nuclear explosions and accidents are summarized in this book. It is intended for various specialists - geophysicists, ecologists, health experts and inspectors, as well as those who are concerned with radioactive contamination of natural environments.

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In 1997, after more than a decade of research, the National Cancer Institute (NCI) released a report which provided their assessment of radiation exposures that Americans may have received from radioactive iodine released from the atomic bomb tests conducted in Nevada during the 1950s and early 1960s. This book provides an evaluation of the soundness of the methodology used by the NCI study to estimate: Past radiation doses. Possible health consequences of exposure to iodine-131. Implications for clinical practice. Possible public health strategies--such as systematic screening for thyroid cancer--to respond to the exposures. In addition, the book provides an evaluation of the NCI estimates of the number of thyroid cancers that might result from the nuclear testing program and provides guidance on approaches the U.S. government might use to communicate with the public about Iodine-131 exposures and health risks.

Underground facilities are used extensively by many nations to conceal and protect strategic military functions and weapons' stockpiles. Because of their depth and hardened status, however, many of these strategic hard and deeply buried targets could only be put at risk by conventional or nuclear earth penetrating weapons (EPW). Recently, an engineering feasibility study, the robust nuclear earth penetrator program, was started by DOE and DOD to determine if a more effective EPW could be designed using major components of existing nuclear weapons. This activity has created some controversy about, among other things, the level of collateral damage that would ensue if such a weapon were used. To help clarify this issue, the Congress, in P.L. 107-314, directed the Secretary of Defense to request from the NRC a study of the anticipated health and environmental effects of nuclear earth-penetrators and other weapons and the effect of both conventional and nuclear weapons against the storage of biological and chemical weapons. This report provides the results of those analyses. Based on detailed numerical calculations, the report presents a series of findings comparing the effectiveness and expected collateral damage of nuclear EPW and surface nuclear weapons under a variety of conditions.

A nuclear attack on a large U.S. city by terrorists--even with a low-yield improvised nuclear device (IND) of 10 kilotons or less--would cause a large number of deaths and severe injuries. The large number of injured from the detonation and radioactive fallout that would follow would be overwhelming for local emergency response and health care systems to rescue and treat, even assuming that these systems and their personnel were not themselves incapacitated by the event. The United States has been struggling for some time to address and plan for the threat of nuclear terrorism and other weapons of mass destruction that terrorists might obtain and use. The Department of Homeland Security recently contracted with the Institute of Medicine to hold a workshop, summarized in this volume, to assess medical preparedness for a nuclear detonation of up to 10 kilotons. This book provides a candid and sobering look at our current state of preparedness for an IND, and identifies several key areas in which we might begin to focus our national efforts in a way that will improve the overall level of preparedness.

Written by world-renowned scientists, this volume portrays the possible direct and indirect devastation of human health from a nuclear attack. The most comprehensive work yet produced on this subject, The Medical Implications of Nuclear War includes an overview of the potential environmental and physical effects of nuclear bombardment, describes the problems of choosing who among the injured would get the scarce medical care available, addresses the nuclear arms race from a psychosocial perspective, and reviews the medical needs--in contrast to the medical resources likely to be available--after a nuclear attack. "It should serve as the definitive statement on the consequences of nuclear war."--Arms Control Today

The Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) was set up by Congress in 1990 to compensate people who have been diagnosed with specified cancers and chronic diseases that could have resulted from exposure to nuclear-weapons tests at various U.S. test sites. Eligible claimants include civilian onsite participants, downwinders who lived in areas currently designated by RECA, and uranium workers and ore transporters who meet specified residence or exposure criteria. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), which oversees the screening, education, and referral services program for RECA populations, asked the National Academies to review its program and assess whether new scientific information could be used to improve its program and determine if additional populations or geographic areas should be covered under RECA. The report recommends Congress should establish a new science-based process using a method called "probability of causation/assigned share" (PC/AS) to determine eligibility for compensation. Because fallout may have been higher for people outside RECA-designated areas, the new PC/AS process should apply to all residents of the continental US, Alaska, Hawaii, and overseas US territories who have been diagnosed with specific RECA-compensable diseases and who may have been exposed, even in utero, to radiation from U.S. nuclear-weapons testing fallout. However, because the risks of radiation-induced disease are generally low at the exposure levels of concern in RECA populations, in most cases it is unlikely that exposure to radioactive fallout was a substantial contributing cause of cancer.

Despite the risk of exposing innocent Americans to cancer-causing radiation, the U.S. government decided that domestic atom bomb testing was "essential to the national defense." This testing, combined with an extremely violent storm, caused New York's Capital Region to receive excessive amounts of radioactive fallout in April 1953.