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CHEMICAL EXPOSURE: ONE VETERAN'S STORY

October 26, 2010 posted by Robert O'Dowd



U.S. AIR FORCE

(SALEM, OR) – **Chemical exposure** can make you very sick and even kill you. Steven is an Air Force veteran, 1978-1982, whose hands shake and is sick with pancreatic disease. In the Air Force, Steven worked with **fuels and trichloroethylene (TCE)**, a known carcinogen.

For TCE only, the Air Force identified 1,400 military sites contaminated with this toxic chemical. Half of the sites were Air Force. Exposure to TCE and other organic solvents has been linked to a number of serious medical conditions by the Agency for Toxic Substances Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Federal agency responsible for performing public health assessments of military Superfund sites.

According to a Wright-Patterson AFB study, “While there is little epidemiological evidence for fuel-induced death, cancer, or other serious organic disease in fuel-exposed workers, large numbers of self-reported health complaints in this cohort appear to justify study of more subtle health consequences. A number of recently published studies reported acute or persisting biological or health effects from acute, subchronic, or chronic exposure of humans or animals to kerosene-based hydrocarbon fuels, to constituent chemicals of these fuels, or to fuel combustion products.”

Steven's story is worth retelling. You won't find anything like it on any recruiting flyers:

"I was a Fuels Specialist AFSC (USAF) Grand Forks North Dakota and Ramstein Air Base, Germany. My 2nd AFSC was Repro-Graphics Specialist at Ramstein.

I am angry because with pancreatic disease I could die at any time. I have had so much time in the hospital, I am very worried I can get sick at any time and never come home. My family will never have my benefits.

Please just use my first name Steven. My rank was E-4 Sergeant (U.S. Air Force). I served on active duty from 1978 to 1982.

In the USAF, as a Fuels Specialist, I was soaked **in jet fuel, leaded gasoline, diesel fuel, and trichloroethylene (TCE)** daily, skin and clothing. I moved billions of gallons of **fuel** through storage and transfers.

I got sick, my skin bled from breaking because my limbs had swollen very large. The skin broke open and I had streams of bodily liquids and blood running down my arms. The headaches were excruciating. The headaches were horrific migraines that left me crying and screaming for days and nights. I had tremors with my hands and arms shaking.

The base command finally removed me, placed me into a new career. I worked a couple weeks in a weather squadron, in the communications squadron. Away from toxic chemicals, per the doctors order to be cross trained and not to work with any more toxic and petroleum chemicals..

The communications squadron took me again, and moved me to repro-graphics. That is the job of using off-set printing presses. I had to use inks and the chemicals like **trichloroethylene** to clean the rollers.

Again, the **petroleum chemicals** caused massive skin swelling. Massive edema.

I have since suffered greatly from intestinal disease, tremors, shaking, and neurological disease. I suffer from edema. I suffer from pancreatic disease. Currently from necrotizing pancreatitis.

I have many other physical problems. I have not been able to work in 20 years. I have spent most of the time suffering trying to eat, on morphine. I have suffered through many operations. My last stay was for six months for a pancreas operation.

In the 1990's the VA only gave me 50% for headaches. They have refused and denied me further disability and I'm in the appeal stages.

My marriage was ruined I had lost my home and could not work for 20 years, my life crashed down around me. Twenty years of lying down mostly. Morphine helps.

I gave them almost five years in the USAF, and had to leave because I got sick so many times, I had already gone through two jobs, had been hospitalized in the USAF for pneumonia, gastritis, concussion, and suffered from severe **toxic petroleum chemical poisoning.**"

The appeals process has not yet given me one face-to-face meeting to tell them my story. I got an IMO (Independent Medical Opinion) from a toxicologist/doctor with tons of information and research backing up my illnesses from exposure to toxic chemicals.

Ever day I just lay around sick waiting for the damned appeal to let me talk to someone face to face to tell me my story and ask why. As they can only send denials and put me on hold. I have not even gone into specifics, and all my problems. This is only part of the horror show."

Chemical Exposures

A study of the biological and health effects of exposure to kerosene-based jet fuels and performance additives funded by Wright-Patterson AFB reported that: "Over 2 million military and civilian personnel per year (over 1 million in the United States) are **occupationally exposed**, respectively, to jet propulsion fuel-8 (JP-8), JP-8 +100 or JP-5, or to the civil aviation equivalents Jet A or Jet A-1. Approximately 60 billion gallon of these kerosene-based jet fuels are annually consumed worldwide (26 billion gallon in the United States), including over 5 billion gallon of **JP-8** by the militaries of the United States and other NATO countries. JP-8, for example, represents the largest single chemical exposure in the U.S. military (2.53 billion gallon in 2000), while Jet A and A-1 are among the most common sources of nonmilitary occupational *chemical* exposure. Although more recent figures were not available, approximately 4.06 billion gallon of kerosene per se were consumed in the United States in 1990 (IARC, 1992). These exposures may occur repeatedly to raw fuel, vapor phase, aerosol phase, or fuel combustion exhaust by **dermal absorption, pulmonary inhalation, or oral ingestion routes.**"

<http://www.veteranstoday.com/2010/10/24/veterans-exposed-to-chemicals-need-to-know/>

WHAT DOES NOT KILL YOU DOES NOT ALWAYS MAKE YOU STRONGER

Brain - attacked by solvents, depleted uranium, & lead

Hormones- attacked by perchlorate & fuels.

Heart - attacked by heavy metals, & radiation

Muscles & nerves attacked by pesticides, metals, & solvents

Reproductive - infertility & birth defects from solvents, metals, radiation, pesticides

Many cancers are caused by solvents, metals, pesticides & radiation.

**If you served & were exposed to toxic chemicals
you have a need to know in order to stay healthy.**

DEMAND THE RIGHT TO KNOW AND BE HEARD.

See: <http://militarysuperfunds.blogspot.com> for more information

<http://www.veteranstoday.com/2010/10/26/chemical-exposure-one-veteran%E2%80%99s-story/>