

The RadioActivist Campaign

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Radioactive Neighbor

Report: Independent Monitoring Helps Stop Radioactive Releases

During 5 months of independent monitoring, unreported releases of radioactivity from the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL) almost stopped. Initial sampling of 7 locations around LLNL in December 2003 detected four types of previously unreported artificial radioactivity. Follow-up sampling in May 2004 found the unreported radioactivity around LLNL had almost disappeared.

The RadioActivist Campaign (TRAC), an independent scientific organization, based in Belfair, Washington, monitored the radioactivity around LLNL, in collaboration with Tri-Valley CAREs of Livermore.

TRAC's director, Norm Buske says: "Independent monitoring has revealed the lack of public protection provided by LLNL's official monitoring program. Their self-monitoring is fundamentally flawed and does not protect the public. Independent monitoring of the nuclear weapons facility makes Livermore safer."

TRAC explains that the superficial radioactivity measured in December 2003 was then washed away by rainfall, and LLNL probably did not release much more unreported radioactivity before TRAC next monitored LLNL's surroundings in May 2004.

Marylia Kelley, executive director of Tri-Valley CAREs, commented: "This study shows the importance of independent monitoring around the Laboratory. Independent monitoring empowers our community. We want – and need – this type of study to protect our health and environment."

Copies of the TRAC's report, "Radioactive Neighbor: Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory," can be obtained from Tri-Valley CAREs or The RadioActivist Campaign.

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