

Fernald Health Effects Subcommittee (FHES)

Spring 1999

- Official Name:** The Citizens' Advisory Committee on Public Health Service Activities and Research at Department of Energy (DOE) Sites, Fernald Health Effects Subcommittee (FHES).
- Established:** Spring 1996
- Purpose:** To provide community-based advice and recommendations to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) concerning the agencies' public health activities at the former FMPC.
- Authority:** Authorized through 42 U.S. Code 217a, Section 222 of the Public Health Service Act, as amended. FHES is governed by the provisions of Public Law 92-463, the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), as amended (5 U.S. Code App. 2), which sets forth standards for the formation and use of advisory committees.
- Lead Agency:** The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).
- Structure:** FHES is comprised of up to 30 members. One half of the membership serves 2-year terms; the remaining membership serves from 2 to 4 years. Members were selected based upon their knowledge of the community and labor concerns and their ability to offer diverse community viewpoints and interests. Members are representative of the community affected by the Fernald Site. Key governmental liaisons include ATSDR, CDC's National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (CDC NIOSH) and the National Center for Environmental Health (CDC NCEH), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) and the state of Ohio health and environmental departments. CDC is the agency, which has lead responsibility for FHES activities at DOE's Fernald Site. From 1996 to Winter 1999, management and support services for the FHES were provided by the CDC's National Center for Environmental Health (CDC NCEH). The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) now conduct all management and support services for the FHES.
- Meetings:** Meetings are held approximately 4 times per year in the Fernald area. Meeting planning, organization, advertisement and administration is managed by the Executive Secretary (employed by the lead agency, CDC). Meetings are open to the public. All meeting proceedings are recorded as required by applicable laws and regulations.

Subcommittee Members *(as of Spring 1999)*

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SUBCOMMITTEE QUESTIONS OR BUSINESS ITEMS?

To Reach the FHES Executive Secretary:
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Federal Agencies Involved in Fernald Health Studies

The Department of Health and Human Services and the DOE have two Memoranda of Understanding for public health activities and research at DOE sites. These Memoranda are the driving forces behind the radiological science research conducted by three Department of Health and Human Services organizations - CDC NCEH, CDC NIOSH and ATSDR. Empowered by these Memoranda, these agencies work to assess the subsequent health effects from past and current exposures resulting from hazardous releases and unsafe working conditions at federal government Cold War-era nuclear weapons production facilities. The first Memorandum of Understanding transferred the responsibility for the management and conduct of epidemiologic research of past nuclear weapons facility operations from DOE to the Department of Health and Human Services (who delegated program responsibility to CDC). In response, CDC assigned two of its "Centers," CDC NCEH and CDC NIOSH with separate duties (*see NCEH and NIOSH below*). The other Memorandum of Understanding between the DOE and the Department of Health and Human Services directs ATSDR to address current public health issues concerning the environmental cleanup of DOE sites—ensuring that ATSDR is able to carry out its public health activities as required by Superfund laws (*see ATSDR below*).

CDC NIOSH - This CDC "Institute" manages the occupational health research component of CDC's Energy-Related Health Research Program. CDC NIOSH was established in 1970 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act and is currently conducting or supporting occupational health studies at 13 DOE sites. Additionally, CDC NIOSH provides consultation on DOE's medical surveillance program for workers. In the Fall of 1997, CDC NIOSH initiated a multi-site case-control study of lung cancer among nuclear weapons workers. CDC NIOSH has also completed an assessment of current Fernald workers involved in decontamination, decommissioning, and handling of hazardous waste as part of a multi-site feasibility study.

CDC NCEH - This CDC "Center" manages the environmental health research component of CDC's Energy-Related Health Research Program. CDC NCEH was established in 1980 to provide practical and constructive environmental public health research and support to communities and public health providers. In addition to the Fernald health research projects, CDC NCEH's Radiation Studies Branch is evaluating possible public health impacts due to past DOE facility operations throughout the U.S. nuclear weapons complex.

ATSDR - ATSDR is required, under federal Superfund laws, to conduct public health assessments and other health activities (which can include health studies, health surveillance, exposure registries, and community and health provider education) necessary to prevent or mitigate current public health hazards from Superfund sites. ATSDR has been involved in the Fernald site since 1992—conducting environmental sampling and meeting with the public.