

Nuclear Energy: Fatal Birth Defects Surge in the US Due to Radiation Exposure

By [Global Research News](#)

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Region: [USA](#)

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GR Editor's Note

The following is a selection of articles by ENEnews pertaining to Hanford, "the most contaminated nuclear site in the western world."

According to Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR): Hanford's radioactive and toxic wastes pose serious health and environmental threats. They are a legacy of international tension and nuclear weapons production in the last century. The challenge of Hanford today is a tapestry woven from this complex history.

For more on the history of Hanford, visit [PSR's web site](#).

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"Nothing [is] more extreme than anencephaly" -[Dr Michael Grodin, Boston U. School of Medicine](#)

'[Fatal Birth Defects Surge](#)' - [Dr. Kathy Lofy, Washington Dept.of Health](#) (emphasis added): Anencephaly is a rare birth defect in which the brain and the skull of the baby do not fully form [and is] not compatible with life... The most well known risk factor... is a deficiency in folic acid... that's one of the possibilities we're looking into [note that [mothers in the birth defect cluster had much higher rates of folic acid consumption](#) than the control group chosen by officials]...Hanford nuclear facility has been one concern of the community. We worked really closely with our radiation experts... who work closely with... Hanford. There have been no recent releases [note how she rephrases this] — no recent CHANGE in radiation releases. We can't really determine any pathway by which radiation could affect all the women in the 3-county area [note all 3 counties surround Hanford]... We're working with the doctors to make sure we're identifying all the cases... It's very important to figure out the rates.



[Dr. Wladimir Wertelecki, MD](#), (Chair of Medical Genetics at U. of S. Alabama), Dr. Helen Caldicott's [Crisis Without End](#), Oct 2014: "The most significant negative impact of radiation on a developing embryo includes anencephaly... Two US studies... sponsored by the [CDC and published in 1988] sought to determine the... impact of ionizing radiation near Hanford... One study detected higher neural tube defect rates [e.g. Anencephaly, Spina Bifida] in two counties near the nuclear complex and the other demonstrated higher rates of neural tube defects in parents exposed... to low levels of radiation."

[Physicians for Social Responsibility](#): Hanford documents [reveal] incredible contamination of the environment and exposure of large numbers of citizens to dangerous amounts... Eight plutonium production reactors dumped a daily average of 50,000 curies of radioactive material into the Columbia... [In 1949] 8,000 curies of iodine-131 were [secretly] released [over] an area of 200 by 40 miles, no warnings were given... [400 times TMI's release of] 15 -24 curies — [PSR](#): Contamination has not and will not stay inside Hanford's boundaries... Over 300 miles of the Columbia... are threatened... [Fires in] 2000... burned three radioactive waste sites [and] plutonium was detected in nearby communities. — [PSR](#): Hanford is the most contaminated site in the Western Hemisphere... At least 200-square miles of groundwater... is contaminated and migrating to the Columbia.

[Nuclear engineer Arnie Gundersen on Nuclear Hotseat](#), Nov. 12, 2014 (at 34:00 in): Birth defect issues occur in the 2nd [generation after radiation exposure] — especially the 3rd and 4th.

Washington Anencephaly Investigation, Oct 2014:



- [Anencephaly in Benton, Franklin, Yakima Counties \(next to Hanford\) from Jan 1 to Oct 17, 2014](#): 9 cases in 290 days with est. 6,423 births (based on 8,084 in 2013) —RATE: 14 cases per 10,000 births
- [Anencephaly in Yakima County from Jan 1 to Jun 6, 2014](#): 2 cases in 157 days with est. 1,700 births (based on 3,953 in 2013) - RATE: 11.8 cases per 10,000 births

- [Anencephaly in Yakima County from Jun 7 to Oct. 17, 2014](#): 3 cases in 133 days out of est. 1,440 births (based on 3,953 in 2013) — RATE: 20.8 cases per 10,000 births (2,860% of US national rate)

[CDC 2010 statistics](#), released 2013: Anencephaly 313 cases; RATE: 0.73 per 10,000 births.

Instead of using the 0.73 rate, [officials claim the national rate is 2.1](#), nearly 3 times higher. The rate of [2.1 is from a study using data from 2004-2006 that estimates the anencephaly rate](#), and only uses data from less than 15 states — unlike the CDC report above which is based on the most current data, uses data from all 50 states, and is not an 'estimate'.

[Nikki Shelton, mother of baby w/ neural tube defect \(e.g. Anencephaly, Spina Bifida\) 13 mi. from Hanford](#), Nov 6, 2014: This is not something that is going away... the numbers are increasing. The last teleconference I was in shut me down the minute I mentioned Hanford! ... let's not let the department of health just sweep this under the rug...WE NEED ANSWERS!

[Interview with Gundersen here](#) | [KUOW broadcast here](#)

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