



Radiation and Public Health Project

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CANCER DEATH RATES SOAR NEAR FERMI NUCLEAR PLANT STUDY MEASURING RADIOACTIVITY IN BABY TEETH PLANNED

The cancer death rate in Monroe County, Michigan, which was slightly less than the U.S. rate, prior to the Fermi 2 nuclear power reactor's startup in June 1985, is now 14.3% higher, according to a new report released today.

In addition, the Monroe County cancer death rate among persons age 24 and younger have been 38.3% above the U.S. since 1992 - the highest rate of the 30 largest Michigan counties. The report was issued by the Radiation and Public Health Project (RPHP) research group.

"The trends in Monroe County cancer rates since the mid-1980s cannot overlook the startup of the Fermi reactor, and the potential role of radioactive emissions on health," says Joseph Mangano MPH MBA, Executive Director of RPHP and study author.

"The report needs to be taken seriously, and follow up measures are urgently needed," adds Christie Brinkley, a long-time activist on nuclear issues, Board member of RPHP, and a native of Monroe County. "In particular our children must be protected, as they are most vulnerable."

The report, using data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, identified that the Monroe County cancer death rate was 4.5% below the U.S. in 1969-1978, but 14.3% higher in 2014-2018, based on 1,794 deaths. Rates are high for both males and females, each age group, all races, and 10 of the 11 most common cancers.

"Anecdotal reports of elevated cancers in Monroe being attributed to Fermi 2 nuclear plant have circulated for decades. This RPHP compilation and revelation of elevated cancer rates in Monroe County is quite damning and warrants further in-depth investigation of radiation exposure in Monroe County" said Monroe resident Michael Keegan.

RPHP plans to collect up to 50 baby teeth from children living near Fermi – the "Tooth Fairy Project." Teeth will be tested in a lab for levels of Strontium-90, a chemical only created in atomic bomb explosions and nuclear reactors. Results will be compared with Sr-90 levels in Detroit-area persons born in the 1950s, using teeth from a study of atomic bomb test fallout.

"I think the Tooth Fairy Project is very compelling," says Brinkley. "Every parent in Monroe County is going to want to hear what is discovered in children's teeth, as it could affect their health and well-being." Information on the tooth study near Fermi, including how to donate a tooth, can be obtained at www.radiation.org.