



DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS



Spotlight on Veterans Health Military Environmental Exposures

Presented to the Elizabeth Dole Foundation

15 February 2022

Health Outcomes Military Exposures

Patient Care Services



HEALTH OUTCOMES MILITARY EXPOSURES

VA has an office specifically devoted to possible health effects of military environmental exposures called Health Outcomes Military Exposures (HOME)

Mission Statement

HOME serves Veterans and their families as the leader and authority on health outcomes of military exposures through science, policy, education and communication.

Vision Statement

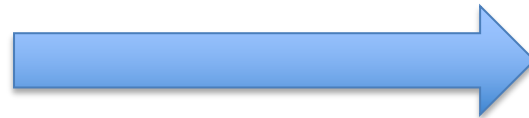
HOME is a trusted team that Veterans and stakeholders rely on as a definitive source of information on military exposures.

We have a comprehensive website that covers many exposure topics:

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/topics/index.asp>

We also have an app!

<https://mobile.va.gov/app/exposure-ed>



HOME consists of **four interrelated programs:**

- **Environmental Health**
 - Pre-911 Programs / Post-911 Programs
 - Radiation dose evaluations
 - Environmental Health Field Support
- **Epidemiology:**
<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/research-studies.asp>
- **War Related Illness and Injury Study Center (WRIISC):**
3 sites – California; Washington, DC; New Jersey
- **Toxic Embedded Fragment/Depleted Uranium (TEF/DU) Center:** Maryland

Whole of Government Partners: DoD, DHHS, CDC, ATSDR, NIH, FDA and EPA



Veteran Concerns: Why VA and HOME Exist

1 in 3

report “definite or probable exposure to environmental hazards”

1 in 4

report “persistent major health concerns due to deployment exposures”





HOME WEBSITE

Post Deployment Health S... VA Identity and Access M... VA Publications List by Title -... AOL - News, Weather, Ent... Google

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs [Get help](#)

Health Benefits Burials & Memorials About VA Resources Media Room

VA » Health Care » Public Health » Military Exposures

Public Health

- Public Health Home
- Military Exposures
 - Military Exposures Home
 - 4 Ways to Find Exposures
 - Agent Orange
 - Gulf War Veterans' Illnesses
 - Radiation
 - Benefits

Military Exposures



Veterans may have been exposed to a range of chemical, physical, and environmental hazards during military service.

AGENT ORANGE NEWSLETTER

Read the latest issue of the yearly Agent Orange Newsletter. This edition discusses Veterans' experiences with the Agent Orange Registry, disability compensation, Camp Lejeune, health research, and more. [Learn more »](#)

WARS & OPERATIONS



- Operation Enduring Freedom (Afghanistan)
- Iraq War (OIF/OND)
- Gulf War
- Vietnam War

[More Wars & Operations »](#)

EXPOSURE CATEGORIES



- Chemicals (Agent Orange, contaminated water...)
- Radiation (nuclear weapons, X-rays...)
- Air Pollutants (burn pit smoke, dust...)
- Occupational Hazards (asbestos, lead...)
- Warfare Agents (chemical and biological weapons)

EXPOSURE TOPICS A-Z

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

Registry Evaluation

A free [medical assessment](#) for possible health problems related to specific environmental hazards

Health Care

[Health care services](#) for eligible Veterans, how to qualify and apply

Research Studies

Publications & Reports

<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/index.asp>



HEALTH OUTCOMES MILITARY EXPOSURES

What we do:

Six Congressionally-mandated exposure registries

- Agent Orange
- Gulf War
- Ionizing Radiation
- Airborne Hazards and Burn Pit Registry
- Toxic Embedded Fragments
- Depleted Uranium

Tracking Exposures better:

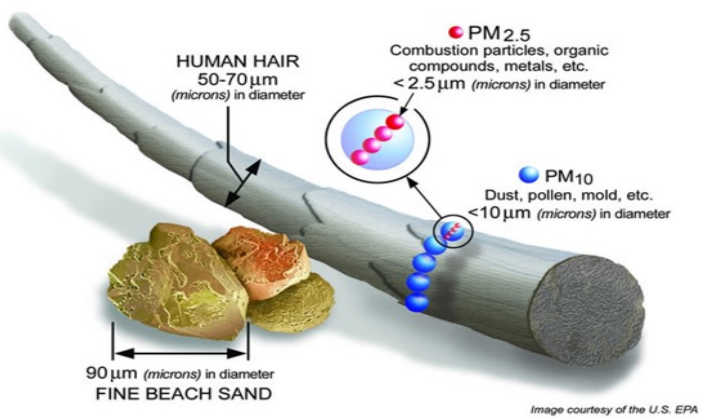
- **Individual Longitudinal Exposure Record/Registry (ILER) and the electronic health record**

Current Actions:

- Gulf War Illness Definition
- Airborne Hazards / Burn Pits
 - VA Review for SecVA an determination of 3 new presumptive conditions (asthma, sinusitis, rhinitis)
- Research / Surveillance/ Epidemiology
- Karshi-Khanabad (K2)
- Garrison Environmental Concerns
 - Camp Lejeune contaminated water
 - PFOS/PFOA contaminated water (national sites and military bases)
- Other concerns: Emerging Issues, Liver Flukes, Antimalarials, Palomares, Enewetak (nuclear)

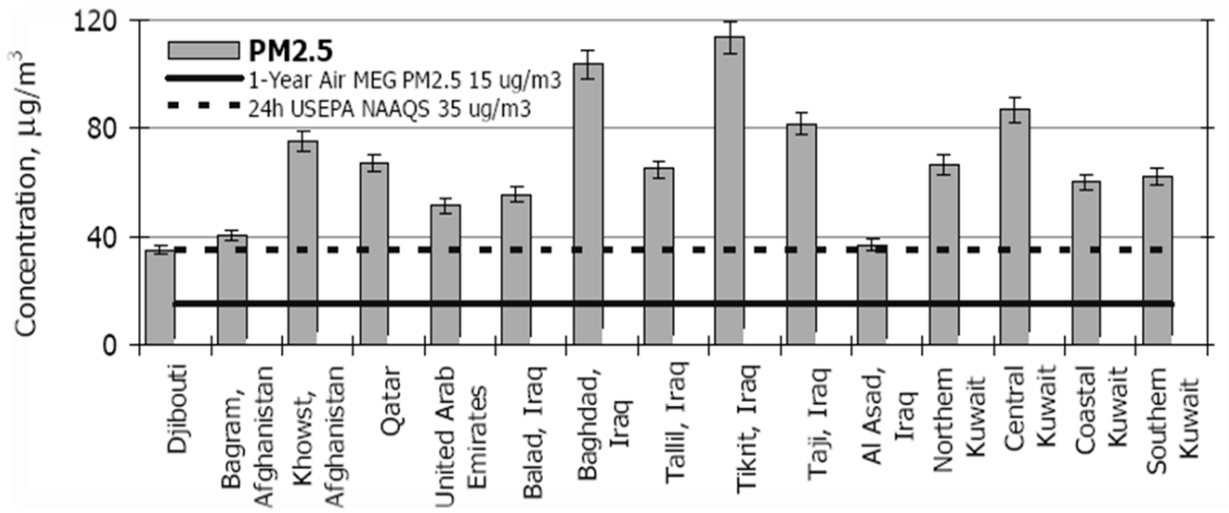
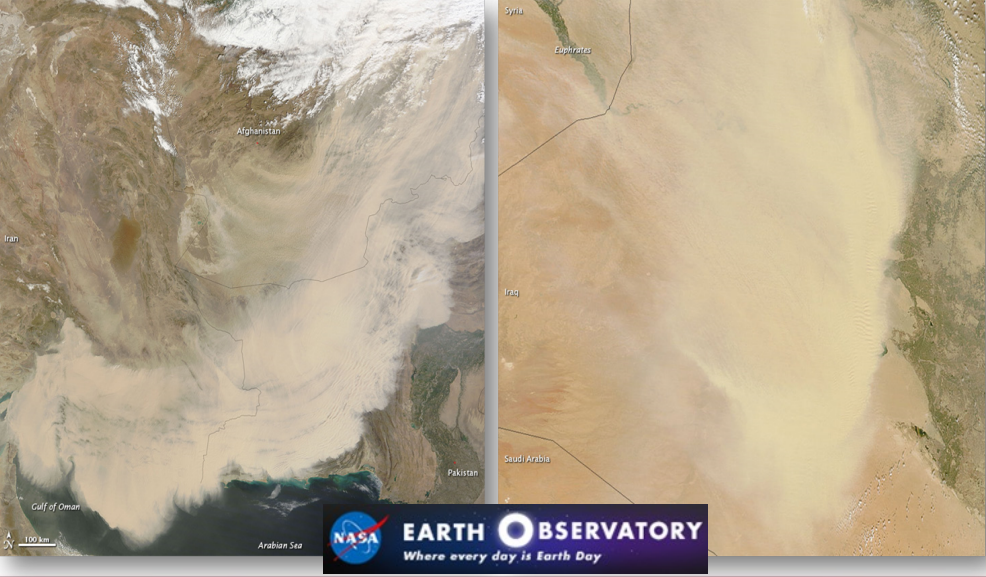


We understand the environment and look for the effects



<https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/burnpits/index>.

VA BURN PIT Eligibility Review vaburnpiter@va.gov (they do not handle DSlogon) For an exam contact your Environmental Health Coordinator <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp>





HOME: EPIDEMIOLOGY AND RESEARCH

What: The study of the occurrence and distribution of health-related states or events in populations and application of this knowledge to control health problems.

Epidemiology studies identify association not cause.

How: Surveys, VHA health care data and mortality data.

Who: Studies often compare deployed to non-deployed or veterans to non-veterans – these comparisons allow us to understand the potential effects of military exposures. The focus is on population level inquiry; we often include veterans who do not use VA.

When: We have active studies on veteran cohorts who have served in Vietnam, The 1990-1991 Gulf War – Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and those who have served in the post 9/11 era; and occupational exposures



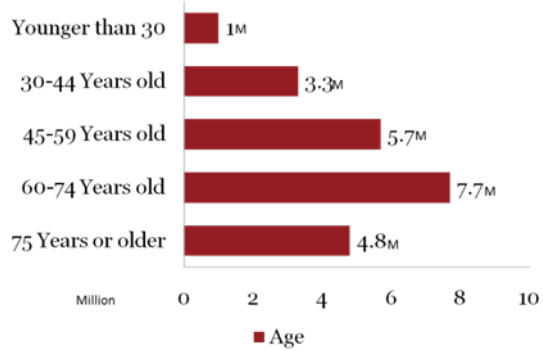
HELPFUL HOME WEBSITES

Secretary McDonough is committed to improving our understanding of military environmental exposures and care for Veterans. He has mandated that all VA providers will have training for in military environmental exposures.

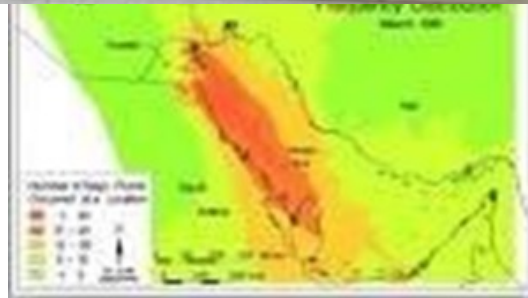
- The American College of Preventive Medicine will award a certificate for to VA and Non-VA healthcare providers for completion of Military Environmental Exposure (MEE) training.
- Military Health Topics A-Z - Access to many military exposure and public health topics
 - <https://www.va.gov/health/topics/index.asp>
- VA registry exams
 - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/benefits/registry-evaluation.asp>
- What is a registry?
 - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/publications/military-exposures/meyh-2/registry.asp>
- Environmental Health Coordinators – At VA Medical Centers; assist with MEE questions
 - <https://www.publichealth.va.gov/exposures/coordinators.asp>
- VA Disability Compensation; a link for applying for benefits.
 - <https://www.va.gov/disability/>



HEALTH OUTCOMES MILITARY EXPOSURES



Agent Orange	Nerve Agent	Solvents	Anti-Malarial
Dust & Sand	Fuels	Pesticides	Radiation
Depleted Uranium	Vaccines	Oil Well Fires	Burn Pits





GRATITUDE

Thank you for the work of the Elizabeth Dole Foundation in empowering, supporting, and honoring our nation's military caregivers; the spouses, parents, family members and friends who care for America's wounded, ill or injured Veterans.

Special gratitude to the lifetime of service and sacrifice of the late Senator Bob Dole

