

Meet the Apicella Boys

Within months of their move to Arvada, Colorado, in 1996, these young boys and their family began a 20 year battle of serious medical conditions including infant brainstem immaturity, hydrocephalus, an undiagnosed seizure, chronic asthma, and tachycardia. Today, the medical crises continues as their father, Pete Apicella, is currently recovering from brain tumor surgery, and Taylor, now age 29, is recovering from thyroid cancer.

Christmas 1998; seated left to right; Baby Connor, Taylor, and Grant.

Are You Sick Too?

Over the past six decades, thousands of residents, like the Apicella's, were unaware of the Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant's haunting, toxic history. Located 16 miles northwest of Denver and 10 miles south of Boulder, the plant was just 5 miles from the Apicella home. The plant operated from 1952 until 1989, manufacturing plutonium fission cores used to detonate U.S. nuclear bombs. Throughout those years, industrial fires, spills, and negligent waste management practices contaminated the air, soil, sediment, groundwater, and surface water with hazardous chemicals and radioactive constituents. These hazards were so severe that in 1989, the FBI and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) raided the Department of Energy's (DOE) facility, Rocky Flats, for suspected environmental crimes. In 1992, the DOE's contractor, Rockwell International Corporation, pleaded guilty to 10 environmental crimes and paid \$18.5 million in fines. The plant was formally closed in 1992 and forced to conduct a \$7 billion dollar cleanup over the next several years ending in 2005. In 2016, a \$375 million dollar lawsuit was given preliminary approval for thousands of homeowners who lived downwind from the former Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant.

Be Proactive

Thousands of individuals who lived downwind from the former Rocky Flats Nuclear Weapons Plant during the production and clean-up period, as well as, current residents in the area, are unaware and thus uninformed about the adverse effects on their health. Without this knowledge, many people are being denied an opportunity to be proactive in matters regarding their health. In an effort to address many long-standing concerns regarding high rates of illnesses in the area, Metropolitan State University of Denver (MSU Denver) is conducting a health survey to determine whether there are identifiable adverse health effects experienced by former and current residents of Arvada, Westminster, Broomfield and surrounding communities. The health survey, which adheres to HIPPA guidelines, and has been approved by MSU Denver's Internal Review Board, collects health related data for those individuals living in the area from 1952 to the present.



Take the Survey

If you were a resident of the areas circumscribed by the boundaries of Highway 7/168th/Arapahoe Avenue on the north, I-25 on the east, Colfax Avenue on the south, and Highway 93 on the west (see below map) from 1952 to the present day, we invite you to respond to the health survey. Relatives of deceased former residents are welcome to complete the survey on behalf of their family member. This survey takes approximately 15 minutes to complete and is located on our website at rockyflatsdownwinders.com. Click on health survey for more information.

Preliminary Results



In November 2016, a preliminary round of data was analyzed which consisted of 1,745 completed surveys for the 64-year period. While these results are not quantifiable, there were 848 cases of cancer with 414 of those cases being cancers designated as “rare.” These rare cancers account for 48.8 percent of the total cancer cases for these survey results as compared to the US rate of 25 percent for “rare” cancers. The most common cancers in this study, in order of prevalence, are breast, thyroid, prostate, and colon. Other rare cancers reported in this study include brain, bone, cervical, leukemia, and ovarian. A complete listing of more than 60 rare cancers identified in this survey is located on our website at <http://rockyflatsdownwinders.com>.



About Us

We are the Rocky Flats Downwinders. Our goals are to educate the community in order to sensitize medical professionals regarding potential adverse health effects suffered by Downwinders and to obtain medical monitoring and inclusion under the Radiation and Exposure and Compensation Act (RECA) for Rocky Flats Downwinders.

Visit our website at <http://rockyflatsdownwinders.com/>

DOWN-WIND-ER: A person living downwind of a nuclear test site, weapons plant, or reactor where the risk from fallout or radiation leaks is greatest. Stay informed and join our community. Like us on  Facebook and follow us on  Twitter.



The Apicella Boys 2017 with their parents, standing left to right; Pete, Taylor, Connor, Grant, & Denise.

“We try to live and appreciate each day, despite our circumstances.”

References

Under The ‘Nuclear Shadow’ Of Colorado’s Rocky Flats. (2012). Fresh Air. Retrieved from <http://www.npr.org/2012/06/12/154839592/under-the-nuclear-shadow-of-colorados-rocky-flats>
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 Aguilar, J. (2016). Payouts to property owners in long-running Rocky Flats suit should start in 2017. The Denver Post. Retrieved from <http://www.denverpost.com/2016/08/08/rocky-flats-payout-property-owners/>