Beryllium Worker Safety - Module 1
Why We’re Here
Transcript

Dr. Herbert Anderson  We saved the lives of hundreds of thousands of American young men. That was quite an incentive.

Former Secretary of Energy - Bill Richardson  They know they did something for the national security of the country,

Dr. Herbert Anderson  We thought of ourselves as heroes.

Secretary Bill Richardson  I think they feel that their government let them down.

Glenn Bell  Beryllium…it’s used in the nuclear industry.

Secretary Bill Richardson  In those days the objective was make as many bombs as fast as possible.

Glenn Bell  It’s extremely lightweight…and to some of us, unfortunately, extremely deadly.

Secretary Bill Richardson  At the very least, somebody should apologize to them.

Dr. Lee Newman  By breathing it in, the immune system comes in with an army of cells to react against it. You unfortunately end up trashing the battlefield, and that battlefield is your lung.

Glenn Bell  Production was put above health and safety.

More resources:
Other beryllium worker safety materials are available on the Department of Energy Website:
http://www.hss.energy.gov/healthsafety/wshp/be/
Secretary
Bill Richardson

Priority one was production of our nuclear weapons.

Former Assistant Secretary of Energy -
Dr. David Michaels

We were using a standard that was implemented first in 1948, and it hadn’t changed and certainly was out of date.

Glenn Bell

My interest right now is in the next generation of workers.

Dr. David Michaels

The Department of Energy is very proud of the new beryllium standard. We reduced the level, which triggers protection by a factor of ten.

Narrator

That’s 1/10th the concentration allowed for by the OSHA Standard. This lower action level will provide greater protection for DOE beryllium workers.

Dr. David Michaels

It's absolutely necessary to spend whatever it takes in these cases to make sure workers are safe.

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