TOXICOLOGICAL PROFILE FOR
THORIUM

Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
U.S. Public Health Service

In collaboration with:
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

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DISCLAIMER

The use of company or product name(s) is for identification only and does not imply endorsement by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.
FOREWORD

The Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) of 1986 (Public Law 99-499) extended and amended the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA or Superfund). This public law directed the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) to prepare toxicological profiles for hazardous substances which are most commonly found at facilities on the CERCLA National Priorities List and which pose the most significant potential threat to human health, as determined by ATSDR and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The lists of the 250 most significant hazardous substances were published in the Federal Register on April 17, 1987, on October 20, 1988, on October 26, 1989, and on October 17, 1990.

Section 104(i)(3) of CERCLA, as amended, directs the Administrator of ATSDR to prepare a toxicological profile for each substance on the list. Each profile must include the following content:

(A) An examination, summary, and interpretation of available toxicological information and epidemiological evaluations on the hazardous substance in order to ascertain the levels of significant human exposure for the substance and the associated acute, subacute, and chronic health effects,

(B) A determination of whether adequate information on the health effects of each substance is available or in the process of development to determine levels of exposure which present a significant risk to human health of acute, subacute, and chronic health effects, and

(C) Where appropriate, an identification of toxicological testing needed to identify the types or levels of exposure that may present significant risk of adverse health effects in humans.

This toxicological profile is prepared in accordance with guidelines developed by ATSDR and EPA. The original guidelines were published in the Federal Register on April 17, 1987. Each profile will be revised and republished as necessary, but no less often than every three years, as required by CERCLA, as amended.

The ATSDR toxicological profile is intended to characterize succinctly the toxicological and adverse health effects information for the hazardous substance being described. Each profile identifies and reviews the key literature (that has been peer-reviewed) that describes a hazardous substance's toxicological properties. Other pertinent literature is also presented but described in less detail than the key studies. The profile is not intended to be an exhaustive document; however, more comprehensive sources of specialty information are referenced.
Foreword

Each toxicological profile begins with a public health statement, which describes in nontechnical language a substance's relevant toxicological properties. Following the public health statement is information concerning significant health effects associated with exposure to the substance. The adequacy of information to determine a substance's health effects is described. Data needs that are of significance to protection of public health will be identified by ATSDR, the National Toxicology Program (NTP) of the Public Health Service, and EPA. The focus of the profiles is on health and toxicological information; therefore, we have included this information in the beginning of the document.

The principal audiences for the toxicological profiles are health professionals at the federal, state, and local levels, interested private sector organizations and groups, and members of the public.

This profile reflects our assessment of all relevant toxicological testing and information that has been peer reviewed. It has been reviewed by scientists from ATSDR, the Centers for Disease Control, the NTP, and other federal agencies. It has also been reviewed by a panel of nongovernment peer reviewers and is being made available for public review. Final responsibility for the contents and views expressed in this toxicological profile resides with ATSDR.

William L. Roper, M.D., M.P.H.
Administrator
Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry
## CONTENTS

FOREWORD .................................................. iii

LIST OF FIGURES ............................................. ix

LIST OF TABLES ................................................ x

1. PUBLIC HEALTH STATEMENT ........................................ 1
   1.1 WHAT IS THORIUM? ...................................... 1
   1.2 HOW MIGHT I BE EXPOSED TO THORIUM? .............. 2
   1.3 HOW CAN THORIUM ENTER AND LEAVE MY BODY? .... 3
   1.4 HOW CAN THORIUM AFFECT MY HEALTH? .............. 3
   1.5 WHAT LEVELS OF EXPOSURE HAVE RESULTED IN 
       HARMFUL HEALTH EFFECTS? .......................... 4
   1.6 IS THERE A MEDICAL TEST TO DETERMINE WHETHER I HAVE BEEN 
       EXPOSED TO THORIUM? ............................... 4
   1.7 WHAT RECOMMENDATIONS HAS THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT MADE TO 
       PROTECT HUMAN HEALTH? ............................ 4
   1.8 WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION? .............. 4

2. HEALTH EFFECTS ............................................. 9
   2.1 INTRODUCTION .......................................... 9
   2.2 DISCUSSION OF HEALTH EFFECTS BY ROUTE OF EXPOSURE ... 9
      2.2.1 Inhalation Exposure .................................. 11
         2.2.1.1 Death ........................................ 11
         2.2.1.2 Systemic Effects ............................. 11
         2.2.1.3 Immunological Effects ..................... 17
         2.2.1.4 Neurological Effects ...................... 17
         2.2.1.5 Developmental Effects ..................... 17
         2.2.1.6 Reproductive Effects ...................... 17
         2.2.1.7 Genotoxic Effects ......................... 17
         2.2.1.8 Cancer .................................... 17
      2.2.2 Oral Exposure ..................................... 18
         2.2.2.1 Death ....................................... 18
         2.2.2.2 Systemic Effects ........................... 19
         2.2.2.3 Immunological Effects .................... 23
         2.2.2.4 Neurological Effects ..................... 23
         2.2.2.5 Developmental Effects ..................... 23
         2.2.2.6 Reproductive Effects ...................... 23
         2.2.2.7 Genotoxic Effects ......................... 24
         2.2.2.8 Cancer .................................... 24
      2.2.3 Dermal Exposure ................................... 24
         2.2.3.1 Death ....................................... 24
         2.2.3.2 Systemic Effects ........................... 24
         2.2.3.3 Immunological Effects .................... 26
         2.2.3.4 Neurological Effects ..................... 26
         2.2.3.5 Developmental Effects ..................... 26
         2.2.3.6 Reproductive Effects ...................... 26
         2.2.3.7 Genotoxic Effects ......................... 27
         2.2.3.8 Cancer .................................... 27
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>RELEASES TO THE ENVIRONMENT</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.1</td>
<td>Air</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.2</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.2.3</td>
<td>Soil</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>ENVIRONMENTAL FATE</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.1</td>
<td>Transport and Partitioning</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2</td>
<td>Transformation and Degradation</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2.1</td>
<td>Air</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2.2</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.3.2.3</td>
<td>Soil</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>LEVELS MONITORED OR ESTIMATED IN THE ENVIRONMENT.</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.1</td>
<td>Air</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.2</td>
<td>Water</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.3</td>
<td>Soil</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.4.4</td>
<td>Other Media</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>GENERAL POPULATION AND OCCUPATIONAL EXPOSURE.</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>POPULATIONS WITH POTENTIALLY HIGH EXPOSURE.</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7</td>
<td>ADEQUACY OF THE DATABASE</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7.1</td>
<td>Identification of Data Needs</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.7.2</td>
<td>On-going Studies</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>ANALYTICAL METHODS</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>BIOLOGICAL MATERIALS</td>
<td>87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>ADEQUACY OF THE DATABASE</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.1</td>
<td>Identification of Data Needs</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3.2</td>
<td>On-going Studies</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>REGULATIONS AND ADVISORIES</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>GLOSSARY</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A</td>
<td></td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B</td>
<td></td>
<td>153</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ix

LIST OF FIGURES

2-1 Levels of Significant Exposure to Thorium - Inhalation. .............. 14
2-2 Levels of Significant Exposure to Thorium - Oral. .................. 21
2-3 Existing Information on the Health Effects of Thorium .............. 49
3-1 Uranium and Thorium Isotope Decay Series Showing the Sources and Decay Products of the Two Naturally-Ocurring Isotopes of Thorium. ......................................................... 58
5-1 Frequency of Sites With Thorium Contamination ...................... 68
# LIST OF TABLES

1-1 Human Health Effects from Breathing Thorium ........................................ 5
1-2 Animal Health Effects from Breathing Thorium ........................................ 6
1-3 Human Health Effects from Eating or Drinking Thorium ............................ 7
1-4 Animal Health Effects from Eating or Drinking Thorium ............................ 8
2-1 Levels of Significant Exposure to Thorium - Inhalation ............................ 12
2-2 Levels of Significant Exposure to Thorium - Oral .................................... 20
2-3 Levels of Significant Exposure to Thorium - Dermal ................................ 25
2-4 The Median Concentrations of Thorium Isotopes in Autopsy Samples from Grand Junction, Colorado, and Washington, DC (in pCi/kg wet weight) .................. 34
3-1 Chemical Identity of Thorium ................................................................. 56
3-2 Physical and Chemical Properties of Thorium and Compounds .................... 57
3-3 Percent Occurrence and the Energies of the Major Alpha and Beta Particles Emitted by Thorium Isotopes with Atomic Masses Ranging from 223 to 234 .................. 59
4-1 United States Companies with Thorium Processing and Fabricating Capacity .......................................................... 64
5-1 Thorium-232 Content in Fresh Fruits, Vegetables, and Tea ......................... 78
5-2 Thorium Levels in Bones of Colorado and Pennsylvania Residents ................. 79
5-3 Thorium Isotopic Concentration in Three Occupational Cases and the General Population of Grand Junction, Colorado (pCi/kg) .................................. 81
6-1 Analytical Methods for Determining Thorium in Biological Materials ................. 88
6-2 Analytical Methods for Determining Thorium in Environmental Samples ................. 91
7-1 Regulations and Guidelines Applicable to Thorium .................................... 96