

Chromium health risk study not disclosed

February 24 2006

Researchers at George Washington University say scientists working for the chromium industry withheld information on the metal's possible health risks.

The allegations, based on secret industry documents obtained by researchers at George Washington University and the Washington-based Public Citizen Health Research Group come days before the Occupational Safety and Health Administration is to announce its new standard for workplace exposure to hexavalent chromium.

The researchers say the documents show that the industry conducted a study that found a fivefold increase in lung cancer deaths from moderate exposures to chromium, however, the study results were never published or given to OSHA, the Washington Post reported Friday.

Company representatives have denied any wrongdoing.

"The idea that there was a conspiracy here ... is completely and utterly false," said Kate McMahon-Lohrer, a lawyer at Collier Shannon and counsel to the Chromium Coalition, an industry group.

The findings are published in the online journal Environmental Health.

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Citation: Chromium health risk study not disclosed (2006, February 24) retrieved 18 April 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2006-02-chromium-health-disclosed.html>

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