

## Hazard/Definition

### Radiological Incident-Fixed Facility:

An uncontrolled release of radioactive material at a commercial power plant or other nuclear facility. Areas at risk are designated as within the emergency planning zone of such facilities.

## Description/Frequency

The Rocky Flats Plant is a manufacturing facility owned by the United States Government and operated by a private contractor under the administration of the Department of Energy. The previous functions of the facility were metal component production and chemical processing of scrap radioactive material parts for "triggers" for nuclear weapons. Other major activities performed at the plant were in the areas of plutonium recovery from scrap materials and varied research and development of energy programs. The Rocky Flats Plant is currently in transition to decommissioning and decontamination. The plant is located on 12 square miles of government owned land on the northern boundary of Jefferson County.

### **Historical Score: 2**

A critical incident, involving evacuation of Boulder County residents, has never occurred at the Rocky Flats Plant. Two fires, where plutonium burned, occurred in 1957 and 1969. The biggest impact on the environment occurred when containers with plutonium contaminated oil leaked into the soil. Contaminated soil was moved to an area now known as the 903 Pad. During cleanup operations, high winds carried plutonium east of the site.

### **Potential Score: 3**

The probability of an occurrence at the Rocky Flats Plant exists as long as radioactive material is stored there. A *portion* of the Rock Creek development near Superior lies within a 4 mile radius of the plant. For planning and response purposes the *entire development* will be considered. This is the only area within the 4 mile planning zone that has a large number of residents. Prevailing winds are usually in a direction that would carry the contamination away from Boulder County but radiological incidents can escalate rapidly and offsite releases are possible.

### **Impact on Life and Property:**

Depending on weather conditions and wind direction, an incident occurring at the Rocky Flats Plant could impact the Cities of Boulder, Louisville, Lafayette and Broomfield.

## Mitigation Options/Strategies

- C The State of Colorado has established an emergency planning zone with a 4 mile radius expandable to 10 miles, for the protection of the public.
- C A brochure has been published to provide safety information to anyone living within a four (4) mile area around the Rocky Flats Plant.
- C Response personnel and agencies plan, train and exercise on a regular basis for incidents that could occur at the Rocky Flats Plant.
- C Regular meetings with officials from Rocky Flats and Boulder County personnel are conducted. These meetings are for ongoing planning and mitigation strategies that would help lessen the impact should an incident occur at the plant.
- C SCC Communications and US West partnered together for a warning and evacuation system for Boulder County. It is called the Emergency Warning and Evacuation Service (EWES) and is part of the Emergency Preparedness Network (EPN). The existing 9-1-1 database of telephone numbers and addresses is used in combination with detailed maps to help determine the geographic boundaries of an area impacted. The system is capable of calling up to 2,000 numbers in one minute. It is designed to deliver recorded information to endangered people in advance of a disaster or any major event. Messages can be delivered in various languages, as well as to pagers or the Emergency Alert System (EAS). Multiple floodplain areas can be handled during a single event with priority given to the area most impacted.
- C The Boulder County Multiple Agency Coordinating System (MACS) group, consists of representatives from all agencies and jurisdictions within the County. This group makes plans and agreements for the procurement of resources needed during emergencies.

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