

Editorial

Diesel Exhaust and Underground Miners

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This issue includes four papers on the exposure assessment of non-metal miners to diesel exhaust, part of a long-awaited retrospective mortality study conducted by the US National Cancer Institute and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, and known as the diesel exhaust in miners study (DEMS). We expect to publish a fifth paper later.

In 1989, diesel exhaust was classified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer as Category 2A, a probable carcinogen, based on sufficient laboratory evidence and limited evidence in humans. Since then, there have been more reports of human carcinogenicity (Rogers and Davies, 2005; Lewtas and Silverman, 2010). Planning for DEMS began in 1992, and the papers we now publish report on the detailed quantitative exposure assessment.

From early days, DEMS has been subject to a series of legal actions initiated by industry bodies concerned about the methods and implications, which has delayed the publication of these papers. Industry representatives have told us that they expect to send us a response to these papers.

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