



Nevada Field Office News

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For Immediate Release:

November 2, 2015

Definitive Historical Record of U.S. Nuclear Testing Released

Updated document reflects additions and changes since 2000

The definitive source related to the conduct of nuclear weapons tests by the United States has been updated and released. “*United States Nuclear Tests – July 1945 through September 1992; Revision 16*”, is available through the National Nuclear Security Administration’s Nevada Field Office web site: www.nv.energy.gov/library/publications/Holding/current.aspx

The document, commonly referred to as NV-209 (the document’s tracking number), has been revised to add data not included in previous versions and correct a number of discrepancies or inaccuracies discovered since the last revision published in December 2000. Examples include:

- A name change for the Nevada National Security Site (formerly Nevada Test Site)
- A name change for the Nevada Test and Training Range (formerly Nellis Air Force Range)
- Location coordinates were added to include all atmospheric tests and were updated for accuracy
- Height of burst or depth of burial were added for all detonations
- Inconsistencies in hole number designation or sponsoring laboratory
- Tests which have subsided were marked with a symbol
- Radionuclide release information was clarified and made consistent with an existing document related to radiological effluents released from U.S. continental tests
- Information declassified subsequent to Revision 15 was added where relevant
- Interesting facts added to specific detonations are included

Data on United States nuclear tests were obtained from various sources including Nevada Field Office test records; the three national weapons laboratories: Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL), Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory (LLNL), and Sandia National Laboratories (SNL); and the U.S. Department of Defense’s Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA).

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The number of individuals who participated in United States atmospheric and underground nuclear tests is dwindling. Completion of this revision of NV-209 was due largely to the involvement of some of these personnel with first-hand experience. Some are retired but continue to provide assistance as consultants to the Department of Energy, National Nuclear Security Administration and its contractors.

One is a retired weapons diagnostics physicist from LLNL in his mid-80s. He provided invaluable insight to ensure accuracy of many data elements within the document. Another is a retired division director from LANL in his mid-90s. This individual along with one from DTRA provided verification of Pacific test information that was particularly difficult to obtain and validate. As a side-note, the individual in his mid-90s is one of only two people alive to actually witness atmospheric megaton nuclear tests conducted in the Pacific.

The United States conducted 1,054 nuclear tests at locations in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and eleven locations within the U.S. The last U.S. nuclear test was conducted on September 23, 1992.

-30-

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NFO-15-09