BI
BIOMEDICINE INTERNATIONAL
2013; 4: 103.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Concerning the Article of Mangano and Sherman, "Long-term Local Cancer Reductions Following Nuclear Plant Shutdown"

Robert J. Emery

The University of Texas School of Public Health, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Houston, TX, USA

The recent paper by Mangano and Sherman describing long term cancer reductions following the shutdown of a nuclear power plant contains detailed statistical analysis on the cancer incidence in Sacramento County, California as compared to the entire state.[1] Given all of the statistical analysis reflected in the paper, I wondered why a simple summary table had not also been included that listed the reported cancer rates in each county within the state for the years 1988 and 2009. I presumed that such a table would highlight a trend unique to Sacramento County, but I was wrong. I accessed the California Cancer Registry website and created such a table, listing reported age-adjusted rates of cancers of all types rates by county (or county-entity) in annual cases per 100,000 adjusted to the 2000 U.S. standard population for the years 1988 and 2009 (CCR 2013).[2] Interestingly, of the 47 county or county-entities in California, 16 exhibited increases in cancer rates from the year 1988 to 2009, while 31 exhibited decreases. Since the authors speculate that the observed reduction in cancer rates in Sacramento County were due to the shutdown of the Rancho Seco nuclear power plant, to what are we to attribute the reductions in the other counties, some of which are situated hundreds of miles from Sacramento County? Whatever the explanation may be for these other reductions, might they have also been at play in Sacramento County as well?

REFERENCES

1. Mangano JJ, Sherman JD. Long-term local cancer reductions following nuclear plant shutdown. Biomedicine International. 2013; 4(1): 1-12.
2. California Cancer Registry http://www.cancer-rates.info/ca/index.php. Accessed 24 May 2013.

Address correspondence to Robert Emery, DrPH CHP, Professor of Occupational Health, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, Houston, TX 77054, USA. Email: robert.j.emery@uth.tmc.edu

Submitted June 4, 2013; accepted June 5, 2013.
For online access, see www.bmijournal.org