

July 16

This is Phil Arnott this is Phil Arnott for community comment on K INS radio.

Four years I have been interested in in one of our federal agencies known as the CDC or centers for disease control. I call it the center for denial and confusion.

In a recent article in USA today the reporter, Allison Young, wrote about the malfunctions in that department. She wrote that for scientists at the CDC put on space suit like gear to protect them from the world's deadliest viruses. These scientists stepped into the labs decontamination chamber where a shower of chemicals was supposed to kill anything on them and make it safe for them to exit in to a in adjacent changing room. The shower wouldn't start and warning lights appeared as a cascading series of safety systems began to fail inside one of the worlds most advanced biosafety level labs. This lab is reserved for work with Ebola and other deadly pathogens.

The seal around the exit door to the changing room deflated to the point that the scientists could see light coming in. As they started an emergency chemical deluge. The showers door back into the infectious disease lab burst open again and again as air pressure alarms sounded.

Interesting, this incident occurred in 2009. This newspaper was finally able to obtain the information under the freedom of information act but it took the CDC almost 4 years to comply with the request. According to this article the information came as a result of mounting concerns in Congress about whether a lack of transparency keeps serious lab safety problems hidden from the public.

According to Richard Ebright, an expert at Rutgers University, this incident reads like a screenplay for a disaster movie. He called the report and the failure a major incident

finally, building engineers were able to manually operate the chemical shower allowing the scientists to safely exit the lab..

This article also pointed out that the CDC has denied Congress information such as the lab at Fort Collins which is among a handful nationwide that have had their federal permits secretly suspended for safety violations. A total of 10 labs were involved in this investigation.

While the CDC says that they are transparent it often takes several years to get the information requested.

I leave you with a point to ponder: don't you often wonder whether our federal government is out there to protect you and I as citizens and taxpayers of this great country of ours.

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The CDC told USA Today that it will be mid-2018 before it releases Lab reports for 2013 + 2014.