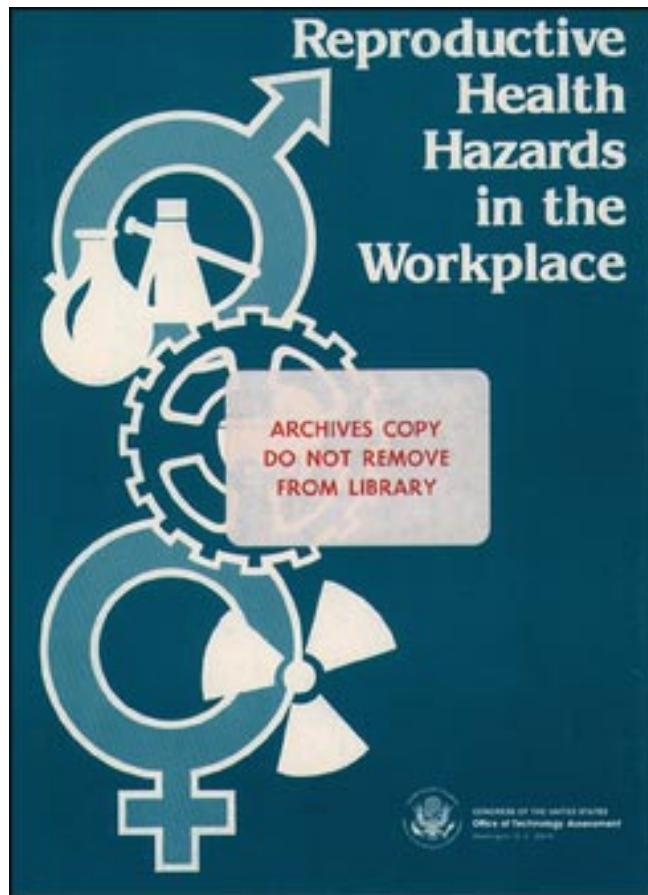


*Reproductive Health Hazards in the  
Workplace*

December 1985

NTIS order #PB86-185030



Recommended Citation:

U.S. Congress, Office of Technology Assessment, ***Reproductive Health Hazards in the Workplace*** (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, OTA-BA-266, December 1985).

Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 85-600559

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents  
U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402

# Foreword

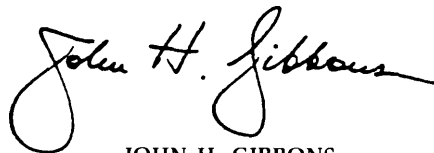
This report reviews current knowledge of hazards and suspected hazards *to* the reproductive health of America's working men and women and to the health and well-being of their children. The analysis was requested by the House Committee on Science and Technology, with letters of support from the Senate Committee on Labor and Human Resources, and the House Committee on Agriculture, Subcommittee on Department Operations, Research, and Foreign Agriculture.

The nature and actions of the chemical, biological, and physical factors that may cause reproductive or developmental impairment are described, as is the complexity of measuring reproductive endpoints. The first section reviews current technologies for assessing reproductive function, and examines the human and animal studies conducted to determine the extent of risk posed by suspected agents and the difficulties in interpreting study findings for this purpose.

The report then reviews the role of the regulatory process in preventing workplace exposure to reproductive health hazards, and the legal redress from either State workers' compensation systems or the tort system that is available to those affected. This section also analyzes sex discrimination issues arising from the fact that protection policies instituted in hospitals and industry have, in certain instances, discriminated against women workers. The third section discusses the ethical principles underlying the protection of reproductive health in the workplace.

The Office of Technology Assessment was assisted in the preparation of this study by an advisory panel of individuals selected to reflect both the substantive issues and the relevant social issues covered in the assessment. Panelists were drawn from academia, industry, trade associations, public interest groups, and labor unions. Their areas of scientific expertise included reproductive and developmental toxicology, male and female reproductive biology, and epidemiology. Legal interests included sex discrimination, workers' compensation, tort, and regulatory law. Eighty-nine reviewers drawn from universities, trade associations, the executive branch, and the private sector provided helpful comments on draft reports.

The Office expresses sincere appreciation to each of these individuals. As is the case with all OTA reports, however, the content of this report is the responsibility of the Office and does not necessarily constitute the consensus or endorsement of the advisory panel or the Technology Assessment Board.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "John H. Gibbons". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial "J".

JOHN H. GIBBONS  
*Director*

# Reproductive Health Hazards in the Workplace Advisory Panel

Ruth Faden, *Chairperson*

Associate Professor, Department of Health Services Administration, Johns Hopkins University

Joan E. Bertin  
Associate Director, Women's Rights Project  
American Civil Liberties Union

Larry L. Ewing  
Professor  
Division of Reproductive Biology  
The Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and  
Public Health

Ronald D. Hood  
Professor  
Biology Department  
The University of Alabama

Vilma R. Hunt  
Professor  
Magnolia, MA

Larry Johnson  
Assistant Professor  
Department of Cell Biology  
The University of Texas Health Science  
Center, Dallas

Norman W. Klein  
Professor  
Department of Animal Genetics  
University of Connecticut

James E. Lockey  
Director, Occupational Medical Clinic  
Rocky Mountain Center for Occupational and  
Environmental Health  
University of Utah Medical Center

David C. Logan  
Clinical Toxicologist  
Corporate Medical Department  
Mobil Oil Corp.

Junius C. McElveen  
Partner  
Jones, Day, Reavis & Pogue

Mary-Win O'Brien  
Assistant General Counsel  
United Steelworkers of America

Neena B. Schwartz  
Professor  
Department of Neurobiology and Physiology  
Northwestern University

Judith A. Scott  
Associate General Counsel  
United Mine Workers of America

Margaret Seminario  
Associate Director  
Department of Occupational Safety, Health,  
and Social Security  
AFL-CIO

Robert C. Spear  
Professor  
Department of Biomedical and Environmental  
Health Sciences  
School of Public Health  
University of California, Berkeley

M. Anne Spence  
Professor  
Division of Medical Genetics  
Neuropsychiatric Institute  
Center for Health Sciences  
University of California, Los Angeles

R.E. Staples  
Staff Teratologist  
Haskell Laboratory  
E.I. du Pont de Nemours & Co.

Jeanne M. Stellman  
Associate Professor  
School of Public Health  
Columbia University

John R. Wheeler  
Attorney  
Amoco Oil Co.

Michael S. Baram  
Consultant to the Panel  
Bracken & Baram

Note: OTA appreciates and is grateful for the valuable assistance and thoughtful critiques provided by the advisory panel members. The views expressed in this OTA report, however, are the sole responsibility of the Office of Technology Assessment.

# **OTA Project Staff—Reproductive Health Hazards in the workplace**

Roger Herdman, *Assistant Director, OTA  
Health and Life Sciences Division*

Gretchen Schabtach Kolsrud, *Biological Applications Program Manager*

Louise A. Williams, *Project Director*

Lisa J. Raines, *Legal Analyst*

Gary B. Ellis, *Analyst*

Dana A. Gelb, *Research AnaZyst, from July 1984*

Thomas M. Bugbee, *Research Assistant, through July 1984*

Eleanor C. Pitts, *Research Assistant, through July 1984*

Phyllis Avedon, *Editor*

Sharon Smith, *Administrative Assistant, from August 1984*

Elma Rubright, *Administrative Assistant, through August 1984*

Linda Ray ford, *Secretary/Word Processor Specialist*

Barbara Ketchum, *Clerical Assistant*

## **Major Contractors**

Michael Baram

Bracken & Baram

Environmental Law Institute

Washington, DC

Brenda Eskenazi

University of California, Berkeley

E. Marshall Johnson

Thomas Jefferson University

Donald Mattison

University of Arkansas

Mark Rothstein

University of Houston

Joseph Santodonato

Syracuse Research Corp.