



Scand J Work Environ Health 2011;37(2):168

<https://doi.org/10.5271/sjweh.3154>

Issue date: Mar 2011

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Key terms: [health physics](#); [industrial hygiene](#); [obituary](#)



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Thomas E Widner

1958–2010

On 19 July 2010, the health physics and industrial hygiene communities lost one of its pioneers in environmental dose reconstruction and radiological risk assessment. Tom Widner spent the last 28 years of his career becoming an authority in health physics, occupational health, and human health risk assessment. He was instrumental in developing and advancing our understanding of retrospective dose reconstruction.

Tom had an uncanny ability to communicate effectively risk issues to both technical and non-technical audiences. He was responsible for designing, conducting, and managing studies that addressed the environmental impacts of chemicals and radioactive materials at some of the most complex sites in the world. He had risen to the top ranks at the firm ChemRisk, the company with which he was associated during most of his career.

Tom grew up in Goshen, Indiana. He attended Purdue University, where he obtained both his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in health physics and industrial hygiene. While at Purdue, he was recognized as an outstanding student and leader, receiving the Jeff Kizer award from the School of Health Sciences. After graduation, Tom took a job in the nuclear energy industry, where he was recognized as a brilliant applied health physicist and a fine industrial hygienist. He helped bring integrity to the field in the post-Three Mile Island era.

Tom was an active member of the Health Physics Society, where he served as president of the Environmental Section and active participant in the Northern California Chapter. He helped organize a special session on environmental dose reconstruction at the annual meeting in 1994 that resulted in the publication of a special issue of *Health Physics* dedicated to the topic in 1996.

Over his career, from what we have been able to determine, he wrote more than 10 000 pages of scientific text describing his analyses of the Rocky Flats, Oak Ridge, and Los Alamos sites. He mentored at least 50 scientists during his 22-year journey studying these three communities. Tom published no less than a dozen papers and three book chapters.

In addition to his professional career, Tom was active in his community, volunteering at public schools and churches and supporting many local causes, including the Alhambra High School Grad Night, Morello Park Elementary School Dinner Dance Fundraiser, St Catherine's Church, and Martinez Youth Baseball/Softball.

Throughout his professional career and family life, Tom exuded integrity, honesty, patience, and wholesomeness. As a mentor, colleague, and friend, it was difficult to find a better person than Tom. He was well known for his sense of humor, appreciation of a good practical joke, and his world famous peanut brittle, which he made every year around the holidays. Tom was an intelligent professional dedicated to advancing the field of health physics.

He is survived by his wife, Kathy; son, Chris; daughter, Molly; and many friends and colleagues. *A memorial scholarship in Tom's honor has been set up at Purdue University. Contributions should be made out to "Purdue Foundation" with "IMO (In Memory of) Tom Widner" in the memo. Checks should be sent directly to Mr. Travis Stoutenborough at Purdue University: 502 N. University St., West Lafayette, IN 47907.*

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