

New report uncovers elevated breast cancer risk for working women

Breast Cancer Fund, scientists, doctors and labor advocates call for immediate action to put breast cancer out of work

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Attention reporters: Scientists, doctors and workers representing a range of sectors, are available for interviews.

SAN FRANCISCO- A first of its kind [review of the scientific literature](#) on women workers and breast cancer, released by the Breast Cancer Fund in time for Labor Day, uncovers more than 20 occupations associated with considerably increased risk of breast cancer compared to the risk for the general population.

“Because workers are often exposed to carcinogenic or toxic substances at regular doses for long periods of time, they are the modern-day canaries in the coal mine,” said Jeanne Rizzo, president and CEO of the Breast Cancer Fund. “We are confident that there is a better way forward, and that a cancer-free economy is within our grasp. It’s time to put breast cancer out of work.”

Scientists, medical professionals and worker representatives have applauded the review.

“The authors have produced a comprehensive and thoroughly documented review of the state of the evidence that should be immensely valuable to advocates, students and policy-makers. The Breast Cancer Fund deserves enormous credit for their leadership and vision in illuminating this important part of the breast cancer story.” -Dick Clapp, Professor Emeritus of Environmental Health, Boston University School of Public Health and Adjunct Professor at the University of Massachusetts—Lowell.

“The rules and regulations that are supposed to protect our health and safety at work just aren’t working. The science shows that fewer women would get breast cancer if we did more to control exposures in the workplace. We know what to do to limit toxic chemicals and we need industry and the government to help us do it.” - Charlotte Brody, R.N., Vice President of Health Initiatives, BlueGreen Alliance.

With the release of this report the Breast Cancer Fund is launching an ongoing advocacy campaign that involves lawmakers, state and federal agencies, and consumers to decrease toxic exposures on the job.

The full report, infographics and additional information can be found at www.breastcancerfund.org/workingwomen

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The Breast Cancer Fund is the leading national organization working to prevent breast cancer by eliminating our exposures to toxic chemicals and radiation linked to the disease. www.breastcancerfund.org

By the Numbers

Some surprising findings of elevated breast cancer risk compared with the general population:

- First responders (police, firefighters, military personnel) – Up to 2.5 times higher risk
- Food and beverage production workers – Up to 5 times higher risk
- Hairdressers and cosmetologists – Up to 5 times higher risk
- Manufacturing and machinery workers – Up to 3 times higher risk
- Doctors, physicians and other medical workers excluding nurses – Up to 3.5 times greater risk