



## Guide to the William Geagley Collection on Nuclear Safety

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## Table of Contents

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Summary Information .....	3
Biographical Note .....	3
Scope and Contents Note .....	5
Arrangement .....	5
Administrative Information .....	5
Related Materials .....	6
Names and Subjects .....	7
Collection Inventory .....	7

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository:</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
<b>Creator:</b>	Geagley, William C., 1890-1971
<b>Contributor:</b>	Michigan. Department of Agriculture & Rural Development
<b>Title:</b>	William Geagley Collection on Nuclear Safety
<b>ID:</b>	MS-00792
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1951-1960
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.64 Cubic Feet (1 box)
<b>Physical Description:</b>	0.58 Linear Feet
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	The William Geagley Collection on Nuclear Safety contains government publications, memoranda, and pamphlets about counteracting nuclear contamination of food supplies from 1951 to 1960. The materials primarily document Geagley's oversight of the development of food safety contingency plans for the Michigan Department of Agriculture. The materials also contain information relating to the Nevada Test Site's plans for Operation Plumbbob, atmospheric and underground nuclear tests held in 1957 in Nevada.

### Preferred Citation

William Geagley Collection on Nuclear Safety, 1951-1960. MS-00792. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Biographical Note

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William Geagley was the chief chemist of the Michigan State Department of Agriculture from the 1930s to the 1970s. During his tenure, he oversaw the development of plans to counteract food contaminated with nuclear radiation. The Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development's William C. Geagley Laboratory was named in his honor, and it oversees pesticide and food safety.

Source:

"Regulatory Services," Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development. Accessed December 22, 2015. [http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1568\\_2389-7795--,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/mdard/0,4610,7-125-1568_2389-7795--,00.html)

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Historical Background

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The Nevada Test Site (NTS) located in Nye County, 65 miles north of Las Vegas, Nevada, hosted 928 atmospheric and underground nuclear tests between 1951 and 1992. When the test site was first established, it was managed by the Atomic Energy Commission, but the U.S. Department of Energy now operates the site.

President Harry S. Truman authorized use of the NTS for nuclear testing in 1951 because the NTS had favorable weather and was more accessible than previous testing sites, including Bikini Atoll and Enewetak Atoll in the Marshall Islands. Although the NTS was close to Las Vegas and other communities in Nevada, and atmospheric tests could be seen from Las Vegas, the military largely dismissed the possible health hazards that nuclear radiation posed to Nevada residents. Tests conducted by the United States Atomic Energy Commission in the early 1960s, medical reports in the 1970s, and subsequent lawsuits showed that radiation did in fact affect many residents in Nevada and neighboring states.

In 1957, the Nevada Test Site conducted a series of tests on the Yucca Flat under the name Operation Plumbbob. The Hood test on July 5 was the largest atmospheric test ever held in the United States. Other tests included the John test, which experimented with nuclear-tipped rockets, and the Priscilla test, which exposed animals to nuclear radiation to observe its effects.

In 1963, the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom agreed to the Partial Test Ban Treaty, which prevented further atmospheric tests; consequently, the last atmospheric test at the NTS was held in 1962. The last underground test happened three decades later in 1992. In October of 1992, a moratorium temporarily ended all testing. In 1993, 108 countries agreed to the Test Ban Treaty, and though the U.S. did not agree, it has honored the articles by ceasing nuclear tests.

Sources:

Moore, Alan. "Nevada Test Site Overview." *Online Nevada Encyclopedia*. March 18, 2010. <http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/nevada-test-site-overview>

Moore, Alan. "Yucca Flat." *Online Nevada Encyclopedia*. July 8, 2008. <http://www.onlinenevada.net/articles/yucca-flat>

Palevsky, Mary. "Underground Nuclear Testing at the Nevada Test Site." *Online Nevada Encyclopedia*. March 16, 2009. <http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/underground-nuclear-testing-nevada-test-site>

Palevsky, Mary. "Atmospheric Nuclear Testing at the Nevada Test Site." *Online Nevada Encyclopedia*. March 16, 2009. <http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/atmospheric-nuclear-testing-nevada-test-site>

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Scope and Contents Note

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The William Geagley Collection on Nuclear Safety contains government publications, memoranda, and pamphlets about counteracting nuclear contamination of food supplies from 1951 to 1960. The materials primarily document Geagley's oversight of the development of food safety contingency plans for the Michigan Department of Agriculture. The materials also contain information relating to the Nevada Test Site's plans for Operation Plumbbob, atmospheric and underground nuclear tests held in 1957 in Nevada.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Arrangement

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Materials are arranged alphabetically.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Administrative Information

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### Access

The collection is open for research.

### Publication Rights

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Reproductions and Use](#) on the UNLV Special Collections website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish.

### Acquisition Note

Materials were donated in 2015 by Aaron Sheehan-Dean; accession number 2015-110.

## Processing Note

Materials were processed by Lindsay Oden in 2015. In 2018, as part of an archival backlog elimination project, Sarah Jones revised the collection description to bring it into compliance with current professional standards.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

The following resources may provide additional information related to the materials in this collection:

Alice P. Broudy Papers on Broudy v United States, 1948-2006. MS-00097. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Bill Beam Papers, 1955-2004. MS-00531. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

U.S. Department of Energy Photograph Collection on the Nevada Test Site, 1945-1982. PH-00282. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Nevada Desert Experience Records, 1957-2007. MS-00524. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

George Knox Roth Collection, 1959-1980. MS-00238. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Baneberry Nuclear Test Trial Records, 1969-1989. MS-00019. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Reynolds Electrical and Engineering Company Photograph Collection, 1963-1981. PH-00200. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Edward Halligan Papers, 1962-1966. MS-00168. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Gay Kauffman Nevada Test Site Papers, 1955-1967. MS-00535. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

John F. Campbell Collection, 1964-2004. MS-00532. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Nevada Test Site Oral History Project. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

[^ Return to Table of Contents](#)

## Names and Subjects

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- Nevada National Security Site (Nev.)
- Nuclear weapons -- Testing
- Radioactive fallout -- Nevada
- Food -- Safety measures
- Civil defense

## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Containers	
Nuclear safety publications		
"A Reference Manual for Civil Defense Training: Basic Technical Course" by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, approximately 1957-1959 (0001)	box 01	folder 01
Bulletins about biological and radiological warfare from the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization, Battle Creek, Michigan to the Michigan Department of Agriculture, 1951-1959 (0002)	box 01	folder 02
"Civil Defense Information for Food and Drug Officials" by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1956 (0003)	box 01	folder 03
Civil Defense Technical Bulletin by the Federal Civil Defense Administration, 1957 June (0004)	box 01	folder 04
Civil Defense training course handouts and classroom materials for food and drug officials conducted by the Food and Drug Administration, 1960 (0005)	box 01	folder 05
Consolidated Erie County Office of Civil Defense radiological fallout memoranda, 1954-1955 (0006)	box 01	folder 06
Correspondence, 1957-1958 (0007)	box 01	folder 07
"Defense Against Radioactive Fallout on the Farm" Farmer's Bulletin no. 2107 by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1957 (0008)	box 01	folder 08
"Effects of Dissemination of Radioactive Materials on Water Resource Conservation with Special Reference to Michigan" by Morris Deutsch, Department of Resource Development, Michigan State University, 1959 (0009)	box 01	folder 09

Emergency manual guides for nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons by the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1959 July 31 (0010)	box 01	folder 10
Federal Register, 1960 September 07 (0011)	box 01	folder 11
Pamphlets about surviving nuclear attacks, 1958-1960 (0012)	box 01	folder 12
"Radiation and Monitoring Fundamentals for the Fire Service" by the International Association of Fire Chiefs, 1955 (0013)	box 01	folder 13
"The Family Fallout Shelter" by the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization, 1959 (0014)	box 01	folder 14
"The National Plan for Civil Defense and Defense Mobilization" by the Executive Office of the President, Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization, 1958 (0015)	box 01	folder 15
William Geagley's notes, undated (0016)	box 01	folder 16
Nevada Test Site		
"Basic Radiological Safety Training Manual" by Floyd W. Wilcox, John S. Coogan, Robert L. Hanzel, and William S. Johnson of the Radiological Safety Division of Reynolds Electrical and Engineering Company, 1957 (0017)	box 01	folder 17
Information for participants in Federal Civil Defense Administration Program 36, Civil Effects Test Group "Operation Plumbbob", 1957 (0018)	box 01	folder 18
Nevada Test Site Bulletin, 1957 June (0019)	box 01	folder 19
Operation Plumbbob briefs and memoranda, 1957 (0020)	box 01	folder 20
Operation Plumbbob newspaper clippings, 1957 (0021)	box 01	folder 21
Photographs of the Nevada Test Site nuclear tests and personnel, 1957 (0022)	box 01	folder 22
Press briefings from the Nevada Test Organization, 1957 June 25 (0023)	box 01	folder 23