



Table 1.5 Average annual radiation exposures globally from a variety of sources and incidents, relative to average natural background at an arbitrary level of 100.

Source	Level
natural background	100
Chernobyl (1986–87 only)	1.25
weapons testing (1986, 10% of 1963)	0.4
phosphate industry*	0.25
Sellafield fire (1957 only)	0.01
nuclear industry	0.008
Three-Mile Island (1979 only)	0.0002

* Phosphates contain low natural abundances of uranium, but are rich in potassium whose unstable isotope potassium-40 does emit alpha particles; they are widely distributed as fertilizers, giving rise to widespread low levels of radiation.