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FROM THE VAC: Navy Ships Included In Agent Orange Exposure List

by Dave Strowmatt

It has become official.

All US Navy ships with the following designations are included in the Agent Orange exposure: LST, LCM, LCVP, PBR, and PCF. US Coast Guard vessels designated WPC, WHEC, WLB and WAK are on the list.

There are a great deal of other ships on the list-too many to list here. Sailors or Marines serving aboard those vessels in Vietnam are now officially eligible to submit claims for any disabilities related to exposure to Agent Orange. It has taken way too long for this approval, but it is finally a fact. Unfortunately, not all vessels that served in the Vietnam theater are listed. That fight is still in progress.

The push for a VA CBOC is still on as well. We recently received a call from US Representative Bobby Schilling's staff about the possibility. There will be a tour of the proposed facility, so the Congressman can make an informed recommendation to the Secretary. We are hopeful that this project still has support and can move forward.

It must be charitable solicitation time. Several people have brought in solicitations from organizations to find out if they are legitimate. We did some internet research and found that they are actual charitable organizations that are recognized. If you get one and are unsure, bring it in and we'll look them up.

The "Stop Loss" filing date has been extended again. The final date for filing is now this Friday, March 18. If you or any one you know has not submitted a claim, please call me and we can help you get it filed this week. Last chance!

If you have any questions about the latest VA benefits or any veterans services available, come on in or give us a call. I don't have all the answers, but we can find most of them. We're open from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except holidays, at 201 S. Main St. in Hillsboro, and our phone number is 217-532-9695.