



FALLOUT SHELTERS: The Next Big Fad?

Reporters follow Fallout Plan Inc. on a tour of St. Louis area fallout shelters

Fallout shelters have been around since the Cold War. Built to shelter occupants from a nuclear explosion and its resulting radiation or fallout, these shelters became standard practice throughout the 50's and 60's. Shelters came in three basic forms: Large permanent long-term, small short term, and temporary. The short and long-term shelters were typically equipped with air and water filtration systems, located underground, and included supplies to sustain life from weeks to months. The idea was to survive long enough so that emergency services could enact emergency responses to the threat. The temporary or makeshift shelters were located in the basements of sturdy concrete buildings, typically located underground or the central-most area of buildings that were concrete reinforced. These shelters typically did not contain filtration systems but did contain ample supplies to support a meager existence. These shelters were placarded with yellow and black trefoil signs. (See picture below)



In 1967 a tour of the Monsanto World Headquarters U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Fallout Shelter was conducted. (See pictures to the right, courtesy of the Civil Defense Museum) In the first photo Mr.

Willard Miner, supervisor (left), and Mr. Richard H. Burr, safety director inspect the shelter supplies. They stated at the time that: *"It just doesn't get any cooler than this. Checking the fallout shelter supplies is all in a day's work at the Monsanto plant"*. The second photo shows a typical makeshift fallout shelter.

At the end of the Cold War, interest in these fallout shelters waned, and most shelters fell to disrepair and neglect. It is unknown how many shelters there are left in the world today, or even how many remain in the greater St. Louis area. The recent terrorist activities around the world as well as third world countries insisting on developing nuclear arsenals, however, has sparked renewed interest in these fallout shelters.



U.S. Army Photo

Photo 1

Fallout Plan Inc. is a privately owned conglomerate that is currently conducting surveys of select fallout shelters throughout the U.S. Post-

Dispatch reporters were allowed to follow Fallout Plan Inc. on their tour of the Monsanto shelter inspection. Although Fallout Plan would not give details as to their overall plans they did state that the Monsanto shelter was scheduled for major renovations, including reinforced concrete walls, floor, and ceiling, along with a complete lead jacket and secure entrance hatch.



Photo 2

The Monsanto Company is a US based multi-national agricultural biotechnology corporation that specializes in herbicides and genetically engineered seeds. Their World Headquarters Campus is located at the junction of N. Lindbergh and Olive blvd in St. Louis, MO. The campus consists of numerous building, all connected by underground tunnels, covering several city blocks. Monsanto and the US Army corps of Engineers both declined to comment on the recent interest in the fallout shelter.

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