

Shift Work at Night, Light at Night, and Circadian Disruption

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“Light at night” was nominated to the NTP by the International Dark Sky Association for possible listing in the Report on Carcinogens and for evaluation of non-cancer health effects. The nomination was targeted to the Office of Report on Carcinogens (ORoC) for assessment of carcinogenicity and to the Office of Health Assessment and Translation (OHAT) for evaluation of non-cancer health effects. The NTP recognized this nomination as having potentially broad application to public health. In 2012, NTP staff sought input from agency partners regarding the interest in this nomination for their agencies. In addition, ORoC invited public comment on “shiftwork involving light at night” in January 2012 via the Federal Register [77 FR 2728]. Through internal discussion, ORoC and OHAT have recognized the complexity of this nomination and a problematic issue of defining the appropriate candidate(s) for evaluation. Currently, “shift work at night,” “light at night,” and “circadian disruption,” are considered relevant to this topic as well as being interrelated. In moving forward, both offices are developing plans on how best to address defining the candidate substance(s) for their area of focus, cancer vs. non-cancer, and carrying out evaluations. They will work in parallel, keep abreast of each office’s activities, and take advantage of opportunities to work together. ORoC and OHAT will share their plans (draft ORoC concept and OHAT preliminary scope and focus) with the BSC at the June meeting.