

# Overly Conservative Regulations Have Been Considered to be Not Harmful But They Can Be Harmful

## A Balance Between Protection and Harm Must be Found

### Finding the Right Balance

#### Establishing Optimal Regulations

##### Valid Scientific Basis Required to Protect Humans and the Environment

- Many Scientific Disciplines Required
  - Nuclear Physics
  - Health Physics
  - Nuclear Engineering
  - Hydrology
- Disciplines Must be Integrated

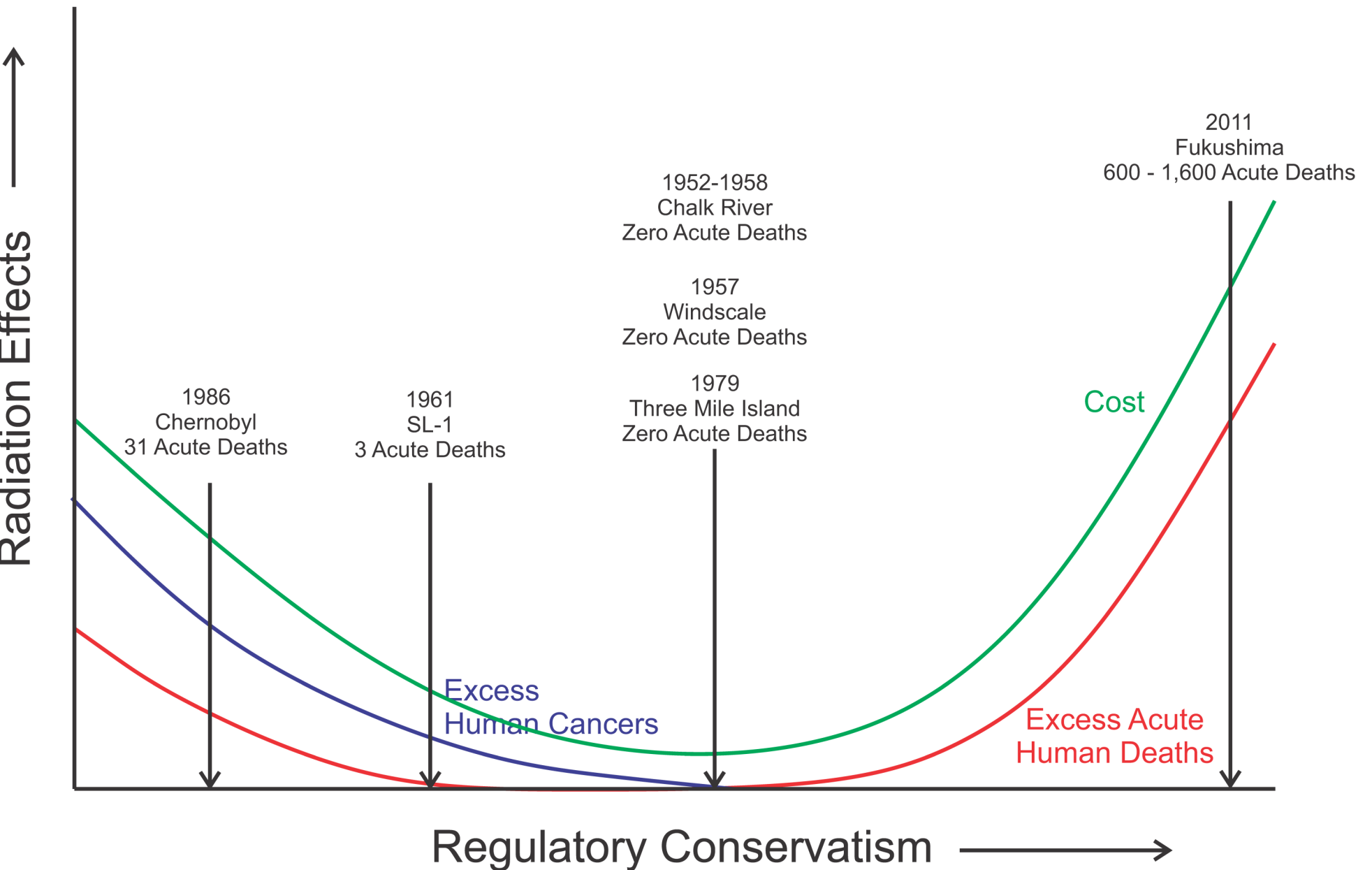
##### Sociological Parameters Must be Considered

- Population Distribution
- Community Impact
- Public Acceptance
- Regulator Acceptance
- Cost

#### A Common Agreement With Respect To “Optimal” Must be Established

- Is a Death Caused by Unnecessary Evacuation Equivalent to One Caused by Radiation-Induced Cancer?
- How Do We Decide Whether to Spend on Stoplights Near Schools Now or Reducing Cancer 10 Thousand or A Million Years From Now?

### Range of Regulatory Consequences



### Impact of Regulatory Decisions

#### Excess Human Cancers

##### Non-Conservative Regulations

- Industrial Exposure and Accidents
- Environmental Releases
- Medical Exposures Excluded

##### Optimal Regulations

- Excess Human Cancers Comparable to Background

##### Excessive Regulations

- No Impact

#### Excess Acute Human Deaths

##### Non-Conservative Regulations

- Caused by Accidents
- Fairly Easy to Prevent With Regulations

##### Optimal Regulations

- No Excess Acute Human Deaths

##### Excessive Regulations

- Creates Inappropriate Fear of Radiation
- Fear can Cause Panic Resulting in Excess Human Deaths
- Mis-appropriation of Funds Can Drain Public Safety Programs

#### Cost

##### Non-Conservative Regulations

- Medical Treatment and Cleanup

##### Optimal Regulations

- Regulatory Administrative Costs

##### Excessive Regulations

- Unnecessary Evacuations and Cleanup
- Unnecessary Waste Treatment
- Unnecessary Site Remediation

### Radiation Protection

The impact of a radiation exposure on an individual is complex, dependent on many variables including radiation type and dose rate and the age, lifestyle, and health, of the individual. However, some generalizations are possible: an extremely low annual dose will have little health impact, and a very high dose over a short time will result in death. These seem to be important considerations when making decisions with respect to adequately protecting people from radiation without experiencing negative unintended consequences.

The figure below attempts to put this in perspective.

