Agent Orange is a highly toxic herbicide used by the U.S. military during the Vietnam War to defoliate hiding places used by the Viet Cong, rice paddies and fertile fields that provided them with food, and to clear the perimeters of military bases to give service members a clear line of fire. Although colorless, it is known as “Agent Orange” because of an orange band painted on the drums used to store and transport it. After years of advocating led by VVA, Congress enacted into law the Agent Orange Act of 1991. This legislation empowered the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to declare certain maladies “presumptive” to exposure to dioxin and enable Vietnam veterans, and some veterans who served along the demilitarized zone in Korea in the late 1960s – to receive treatment and compensation for these health conditions. Service-connected benefits, however, also may be granted for other maladies not recognized as presumptive health conditions.

John Rowan
National President
Vietnam Veterans of America
What makes Agent Orange hazardous?
Over the past few decades, a substantial body of scientific and medical research has shown that Agent Orange and other herbicides containing dioxin have a high probability of causing or contributing to a variety of health conditions suffered by veterans who served in Vietnam between January 1962 and May 1975.

Am I eligible for treatment?
For compensation?
The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has made several maladies “presumptive” to exposure to Agent Orange, and offers treatment and compensation. Blue-water Navy veterans who served on ships off the coast of Vietnam also are eligible for compensation and treatment, subject to the outcome of current litigation.

What if I have an ailment that is not on the list of presumptives?
It is possible to prevail on this type of claim as directly connected to your exposure to dioxin. Success in such claims, however, is not easy to win and is dependent on the medical evidence presented on your behalf.

Where can I obtain more information about Agent Orange?
For information, or to file a claim, it is advisable to enlist the expertise of a veterans service officer. To locate a VA service officer, you can visit VVA’s web site, www.vva.org, and select the “Veterans Benefits” tab on the left side of the screen. From this page, service officers can be located by state or by their last name. The VA’s web site, www.va.gov, is one major source of information.

Types of cancer with no time requirements for manifestation
- Cancer of the bronchus
- Prostate cancer
- Lung cancer
- Cancer of the larynx
- Cancer of the trachea
- Hodgkin’s disease
- Multiple myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin’s lymphoma
- Chronic lymphocytic leukemia

Soft-tissue sarcoma
(other than osteosarcoma, chondrosarcoma, Kaposi’s sarcoma, or mesothelioma)

The term “soft-tissue sarcoma” includes the following:
- Adult fibrosarcoma
- Dermatofibrosarcoma protuberans
- Malignant fibrous histiocytoma
- Liposarcoma
- Leiomyosarcoma
- Epithelioid leiomyosarcoma
  (malignant leiomyoblastoma)
- Rhabdomyosarcoma
- Ectomesenchymoma
- Angiosarcoma (hemangiosarcoma and lymphangiosarcoma)
- Proliferating (systemic) angioendothelmatosis
- Malignant glomus tumor
- Malignant hemangiopericytoma
- Synovial sarcoma (malignant synovioma)
- Malignant giant cell tumor of tendon sheath
- Malignant schwannoma, including malignant schwannoma with rhabdomyoblastic differentiation (malignant Triton tumor), glandular and epithelioid malignant schwannomas
- Malignant mesenchymoma
- Malignant granular cell tumor
- Alveolar soft part sarcoma
- Epithelioid sarcoma
- Clear cell sarcoma of tendons and aponeuroses
- Extraskeletal Ewing’s sarcoma
- Congenital and infantile fibrosarcoma
- Malignant ganglioneuroma

Diseases other than cancer with various time requirements
- Type 2 Diabetes (also known as Diabetes Mellitus)
- Chloracne
- Peripheral neuropathy (acute or subacute)
- Porphyria Cutanea Tarda

Disabilities in children of Vietnam Veterans
- Spina Bifida
- Certain other birth defects

More research must be done to determine if certain maladies in children and grandchildren of those exposed to dioxin are associated with a veteran’s service.