



Oregon

Theodore R. Kulongoski, Governor

Department of Human Service
Public Health Division
Environmental Public Health
Radiation Protection Service
800 NE Oregon Street, Suite 64
Portland, OR 97232-216
Voice 971-673-049
FAX 971-673-055
TTY 971-673-037

March 26, 2009

INFORMATION BULLETIN 2009-02

To: Service and Manufacturing Licensees
From: Terry D. Lindsey, Manager
Radioactive Protection Services Section



Subject: Contamination events resulting from damage to sealed radioactive sources

On February 3, 2009, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission released an Informational Bulletin identifying five events that exposed employees to radioactive material during gauge dismantlement or non-routine maintenance which involved handling of the sealed sources.

During these events, sealed radioactive sources were damaged or ruptured, leading to both facility and personnel contamination. In the last three years, NRC has received five event reports, three of them recently. Contamination occurred while personnel were attempting to remove a source holder from a gauge or removing a source from its source holder. In each case, personnel were contaminated with both external and some level of intake of radioactive material.

Common factors have been identified in the events that may have contributed to the damage. They are:

- *Servicing of gauges based on intuition rather than reviewing the information contained in the sealed source and device registry;
- *Licensees did not develop, document or implement their own procedures to dismantle or perform non-routine maintenance;
- *The aged and potentially deteriorated condition of the gauges and/or radioactive sources at the time of the dismantlement/disassembly was not taken into consideration by personnel that were handling the sources or devices.

The report in its entirety can be obtained from the NRC, Informational Notice, 2009-05, dated February 3, 2009.

"Assisting People to Become Independent, Healthy and Safe"
An Equal Opportunity Employer