

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I AT MANOA

College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources
Department of Molecular Biosciences & Bioengineering

March 19, 2003

MEMORANDUM

To: Mr. Wayne Y. Fujishige
Director, Aux. Enterprises, UHM

From : James H. Moy
Professor Emeritus and
Supervisor, Hawaii Research Irradiator

Subject: Security of the Irradiator

I would like to explain briefly the reason the irradiator door was left unlocked on Monday, March 17, 2003.

Two fluorescent light tubes inside the irradiator room were burned out two weeks ago. I requested to Facility Management to have them replaced. Monday, the ladder inside was placed below the light fixture but the tubes had not been replaced. I thought the electrician was ready to replace the tubes. Before I went to lower campus for exercise on Monday around 12:30 pm, I left the door unlocked so the electrician could go in and finish the job. I assumed that the electrician would come in that afternoon to replace the bulb. If the door were locked, then he could not get in.

In retrospect, it was my wrong assumption to expect the electrician to come into the room that afternoon, which coincided with the security people's visit to the Food Technology Building that raised questions about the security of the irradiator.

Ms Irene Sakimoto, our campus radiation safety officer, can attest to the fact that the Hawaii Research Irradiator has an impeccable record of safety and security in all these years. I have been in charge of the irradiator since 1968. Based on my knowledge in and experience with the irradiator facility and the Cobalt-60 source, I believe the source is theft-proof. In view of heightened national security, there is reason to increase our alert but not necessary to the point of becoming panic. Anybody who tries to go in the irradiator pool to try to steal the Cobalt will die before he can get out of the room.

I will make sure that the door to the irradiator will be secure at all times from now on.

C: Dean Andrew Hashimoto/Walter Harada, CTAHR
Roy Takekawa/Irene Sakimoto, Envi. Health and Safety, and Radiation Safety
Capt. Donald F. Dawson, Campus Security, UHM

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