



**UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

REGION III
2443 WARRENVILLE ROAD, SUITE 210
LISLE, ILLINOIS 60532-4352

October 9, 2008

E. Lynn McGuire, Director
National Health Physics Program (115HP/NLR)
Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Health Administration
2200 Fort Roots Drive
Little Rock, AR 72114

**SUBJECT: NRC INSPECTION REPORT 030-34325/08-16(DNMS) (FORM 591M PART 1)
MEDICAL CENTER, OMAHA, NEBRASKA**

Dear Mr. McGuire:

This refers to the inspection conducted on August 19-20, 2008, with continued in-office review through October 2, 2008, at the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Center, Omaha, Nebraska. The inspection was limited to a review of activities authorized under Permit No. 26-00138-10. The inspector conducted a preliminary exit briefing with the staff at the Medical Center at the completion of the inspection. A final exit briefing to discuss the inspection findings was conducted telephonically with the staff at the Medical Center on October 2, 2008.

Within the program areas reviewed during this inspection, the inspector did not identify any violations of NRC requirements. Therefore, you are not required to respond to this letter.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be available electronically in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records (PARS) component of NRC's document system (ADAMS). The NRC's document system is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>.

We will gladly discuss any questions you have concerning this inspection.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia J. Pelke".

Patricia J. Pelke, Chief
Materials Licensing Branch

Docket No. 030-34325
License No. 03-23853-01VA
Permit No. 26-00138-10

Enclosure:
Inspection Report 030-34325/08-16(DNMS) (Form 591M Part 1)

SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT AND COMPLIANCE INSPECTION



| | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| 1. LICENSEE/LOCATION INSPECTED: VA-Nebraska Western Iowa Health Care System Omaha Division 4101 Woolworth Avenue Omaha, Nebraska 68105 Location: 4101 Woolworth Avenue REPORT NUMBER(S) 2008-016 | | 2. NRC/REGIONAL OFFICE USNRC Region IV 612 East Lamar Boulevard, Suite 400 Arlington, Texas 76011-4125 | |
| 3. DOCKET NUMBER(S) 030-34325 | 4. LICENSEE NUMBER(S) 03-23853-01VA | 5. DATE(S) OF INSPECTION 08/19-20 through 10/02/2008 | |

LICENSEE:
The inspection was an examination of the activities conducted under your license as they relate to radiation safety and to compliance with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) rules and regulations and the conditions of your license. The inspection consisted of selective examinations of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, and observations by the inspector. The inspection findings are as follows:

- 1. Based on the inspection findings, no violations were identified.
- 2. Previous violation(s) closed.
- 3. The violation(s), specifically described to you by the inspector as non-cited violations, are not being cited because they were self-identified, non-repetitive, and corrective action was or is being taken, and the remaining criteria in the NRC Enforcement Policy to exercise discretion, were satisfied.

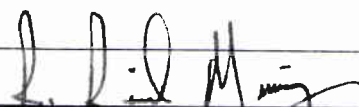
_____ Non-Cited Violation(s) was/were discussed involving the following requirement(s) and Corrective Action(s):

- 4. During this inspection certain of your activities, as described below and/or attached, were in violation of NRC requirements and are being cited. This form is a NOTICE OF VIOLATION, which may be subject to posting in accordance 10 CFR 19.11.

(Violations and Corrective Actions)

Licensee's Statement of Corrective Actions for Item 4, above.

I hereby state that, within 30 days, the actions described by me to the inspector will be taken to correct the violations identified. This statement of corrective actions is made in accordance with the requirements of 10 CFR 2.201 (corrective steps already taken, corrective steps which will be taken, date when full compliance will be achieved). I understand that no further written response to NRC will be required, unless specifically requested.

| Title | Printed Name | Signature | Date |
|---------------------------|---------------|--|------------|
| LICENSEE'S REPRESENTATIVE | | | |
| NRC INSPECTOR | R. Rick Muñoz |  | 10/02/2008 |

10/02/2008

Docket File Information
SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT AND COMPLIANCE INSPECTION



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|---|--|---|--|
| 1. LICENSEE VA-Nebraska Western Iowa Health Care System-Omaha Division REPORT NUMBER(S) 2008-016 | | 2. NRC/REGIONAL OFFICE USNRC Region IV | |
| 3. DOCKET NUMBER(S) 030-34325 | | 4. LICENSE NUMBER(S) 03-23853-01VA | 5. DATE(S) OF INSPECTION 08/19-20 thru 10/02/2008 |
| 6. INSPECTION PROCEDURES USED 87131, 86740 | | 7. INSPECTION FOCUS AREAS 03.03-03.07 | |

SUPPLEMENTAL INSPECTION INFORMATION

| | | | |
|--|------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. PROGRAM CODE(S) 2120 | 2. PRIORITY 3 | 3. LICENSEE CONTACT Michael B. Christensen | 4. TELEPHONE NUMBER (402) 995-3440 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Main Office Inspection <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Field Office Inspection <input type="checkbox"/> Temporary Job Site Inspection | | Next Inspection Date: <u>TBD</u> | |
| | | <u>VA-Omaha, , NE</u> | |

PROGRAM SCOPE

This was an unannounced inspection for VA permit 26-00138-01 with broad scope authorization. The RSO listed on the permit is Michael B. Christensen.

This program consists of a nuclear medicine department, self shielded blood irradiator, 8 research laboratories, and a calibration laboratory. The Nuc Med department performs both diagnostic and therapeutic administrations. During 2008, one CNMT retired and the other submitted her resignation. The VA currently employs two CNMTs working daily and on-call. The permittee discontinued the use of a generator. Radioactive material used is mainly Tc99m, TI-201, I-123, I-125, I-131 and Xe-133, all single unit doses for bone, heart, lungs, MUGA, and HIDA & gastric emptying studies. Doses are prescribed by 2 authorized user physicians. A dose calibrator is used and adequately maintained. 5700 scans were performed in calendar year 2007. I-131 <30 mCi is used 25/year and doses >30 mCi is used ~3/year all in capsule form (out-patient release). Patients are released in accordance with 10 CFR 35.75 (NUREG 1556, Vol. 9, app U & Reg. Guide 8.39). The hot lab is controlled in a caged configuration and maintained locked. Access is strictly controlled. All waste generated is disposed of by decay-in-storage maintained in the hot lab and laboratory waste is maintained in the basement area.

Survey instruments are calibrated in-house at the calibration range using a 1.2 curie Cs-137 source, also maintained in a controlled dedicated room in the basement area. The RSO performs a QM review quarterly and radiation safety program annually. Problems identified are tracked, corrected, documented and followed-up through the radiation safety committee.

The research program is composed of 20 research laboratories. The principle investigators are approved by the radiation safety committee through an internal permit process prior to receiving and using licensed material. The research labs were using micro curie quantities of H-3, C-14, and P-32. Currently, there is no animal study research using radioactive material. All radioactive material in use and storage was properly labeled and secured. Eight research labs were visited and interviews were conducted with laboratory technicians and primary investigators. Cognizant personnel interviewed were knowledgeable and demonstrated appropriate radiation protection practices. Radiation safety training is provided annually to all radiation workers by the radiation safety office.

Performance Observations:

During the inspection, the inspector and members of the VA's staff reviewed the radiation safety program. Permit personnel including the Nuc Med and Research Labs described and demonstrated the processes used to document and protocols for the receipt of and disposal of licensed material. Individuals demonstrated or discussed the use of radiation survey instrumentation and calibration; material accountability; dose ordering, preparation and administration; wipe test analysis; dosimetry; routine security of radioactive material; dose calibrator tests; RSC minutes; audits; and any reportable events. Review of licensee inventory records verified that all licensed material in the licensee's possession had been maintained adequately. The inspector walked down the licensee's RAM waste storage and use locations and through direct observation and the conduct of independent radiological surveys, verified the presence and location of licensed material inventoried. No inventory differences or reporting issues were identified.

The last inspection conducted March 1, 2005 identified one violation for failure to perform a public dose assessment in the calibration and blood irradiator. This inspection verified that the permittee performed the required public dose assessments for both areas. The violation is closed. No violations were noted during this inspection for the time frame from July 1, 2008 through August 20, 2008.

An allegation was received by the permittee related to the potential wrong doing on the part of the two CNMTs no longer employed by the VA. All related documentation and a concerns list was forwarded to the R-III VA MML Program Manager. This action will be addressed under separate cover once the enforcement process is completed.

Persons Present::

William Boyd, Imaging Director
Tom Halverson, Health Physics Technician
Donald Orton
Nancy Gregory, VAMC-Omaha, Associate Director
Rowen K. Zetterman, M.D, Chief of Staff