



**DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS  
Veterans Health Administration  
National Health Physics Program  
2200 Fort Roots Drive  
North Little Rock, AR 72114**

**AUG 24 2011**

In Reply Refer To: 598/115HP/NLR

Kevin G. Null  
Division of Nuclear Material Safety  
Region III, Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC)  
2443 Warrenville Road, Suite 210  
Lisle, Illinois 60532-4352

Re: Reply to NRC Inspection Report 030-34325/11-19(DNMS)

Dear Mr. Null:

I am responding to referenced inspection report dated August 5, 2011, for an inspection at VA Medical Center, Washington, District of Columbia. This facility has a permit that is under NRC License 03-23853-01VA. The report noted a concern for uses of radioactive materials.

In response, I am enclosing a letter from the facility dated August 18, 2011, to address the concern. I reviewed the response and endorse the corrective actions.

I will evaluate implementation of facility actions during our next routine core inspection.

If you have any questions or comments, please contact Paul L. Yurko, National Health Physics Program, at 410-642-2411, extension 6288.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "G. Williams".

Gary E. Williams  
Director

Enclosure

RECEIVED AUG 30 2011

Veteran Affairs Medical Center  
50 Irving Street, N.W.  
Washington, DC 20422

08-23-11P01:30 RCVD



Reply to: 688/00

August 18, 2011

Gary E. Williams  
Director, VHA National Health Physics Program (115HP/NLR)  
2200 Fort Roots Drive  
N. Little Rock, AR 72114

Subject: Nuclear Regulatory Commission Inspection Report 030-34325/11(DNMS) – VA Medical Center, Washington, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, dated August 5, 2011

Dear Mr. Williams:

Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) inspectors noted that a research laboratory technician performed smears for removable contamination using a method that was not consistent with current regulatory guidance: in particular the implementation of radiation procedures in conducting smears for removable contamination in a research laboratory.

RESPONSE: The Director of Research Laboratories and the RSO demonstrated proper technique for area swipes using 1-inch diameter disks and applying moderate pressure over an area of 100 cm<sup>2</sup> or greater. Both approved users under Radionuclide User's Permit successively repeated this exercise by COB on Friday, May 27, 2011.

In addition, current and future amendments to local Radionuclide User's Permits shall incorporate a prescriptive requirement that area swipes using 1-inch diameter disks and applying moderate pressure over an area of 100 cm<sup>2</sup> or greater.

In addition, current, future, and periodic radiation safety in-services shall include the prescriptive requirement that area swipes using 1-inch diameter disks and applying moderate pressure over an area of 100 cm<sup>2</sup> or greater.

Other areas of concern were noted including a NM Technologist failure to demonstrate daily accuracy and constancy check of Capintec CRC-15R Dose Calibrator.

RESPONSE: The NM Service Chief demonstrated proper performance technique for validating daily accuracy and constancy check of the Capintec CRC-15R Dose Calibrator. All NM Technologists successively performed this exercise. A SOP for performing this procedure was posted next to the Capintec CRC-15R by COB on Friday, May 27, 2011.

VAMC DC

August 18, 2011

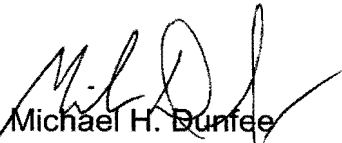
Subject: NRC Inspection Report 030-34325/11(DNMS) – VA Medical Center,  
Washington, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, dated August 5, 2011

Other program improvements included the attachment of Specification Labels to sharps beta/gamma shielded containers in nuclear medicine suites in accordance with 10 CFR 20.1901 Caution signs by COB on Friday, May 27, 2011.

Another program improvement included onsite repair of Beckman LS 6000 liquid scintillation counter by Beckman service personnel effective June 3, 2011. This action ensures timely compliance with required daily, weekly, monthly, or quarterly surveys as applicable under Radionuclide User's Permits.

In addition a one hundred per cent accountability of each and every compound as listed on Radionuclide User's Permit was present and accounted for by the Director Research Laboratories and the RSO in designated freezer -20C in Room 1F-150 or designated ultra-low freezer -80C in Room 1F-110 by COS on Friday, May 27, 2011.

Sincerely,



Michael H. Dunfee  
Acting Medical Center Director