



**UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

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

December 20, 2011

Mr. Gary Williams, Director  
National Health Physics Program (115 HP/NLR)  
Department of Veterans Affairs  
Veterans Health Administration  
2200 Fort Roots Drive  
North Little Rock, AR 72114

**SUBJECT: NRC ROUTINE INSPECTION REPORT 030-34325/11-34(DNMS) – VA  
MEDICAL CENTER, CHILLICOTHE, OHIO**

Dear Mr. Williams:

On December 1, 2011, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) conducted a routine inspection at the VA Medical Center in Chillicothe, Ohio. The inspection was limited to a review of activities authorized under Permit Number 34-26267-01. The inspectors conducted an exit briefing with the staff at the Medical Center at the completion of the inspection.

The inspection was an examination of activities conducted under the Permit as they relate to radiation safety and to compliance with the Commission's rules and regulations. Within these areas, the inspection consisted of selective examinations of procedures and representative records, interviews with personnel, independent measurements, and observation of activities in progress. Within the scope of this inspection no violation of NRC requirements was identified. The enclosed report presents the results of this inspection.

However, while conducting the inspection, the inspectors noted that the Medical Center had a portal monitor installed at the entrance of their waste storage facility. The purpose of the portal monitor was to detect and alarm if there was any radioactive material in non-radioactive waste bins that were being placed in the waste storage facility. The Medical Center developed procedures to be implemented in the event the alarm was activated. The procedures required, in part, that the Nuclear Medicine Department be notified if the alarm activated. Based on interviews conducted by the inspectors, nuclear medicine staff are required to respond and survey waste bins in order to locate the material that activated the alarm.

On the day of the inspection during a tour of the waste storage facility with a member of the nuclear medicine staff, the inspectors noted that the alarm had been activated but the Nuclear Medicine Department had not been notified. Upon discovery of the alarm, the nuclear medicine staff member immediately notified the maintenance staff that the alarm had been activated, and requested that they locate the bin that had activated the alarm and deliver it to the Nuclear Medicine Department. The maintenance staff delivered the bin within the hour and the nuclear medicine staff surveyed the bin and located the radioactive material in the waste bin and determined that it was radioactive waste generated from an outpatient nuclear medicine study.

G. Williams

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The inspectors addressed the issue during the exit meeting with senior management of the Medical Center and expressed concern over the missed opportunity of staff to implement procedures when the alarm was activated. The inspectors also noted that the portal alarm system is not required by regulation, but felt strongly that since the system is in place and is being relied upon to detect radioactive waste, the procedures should be implemented.

Therefore, we request that you submit a reply within 30 days of the date of this letter which describes provisions that the Medical Center will take to ensure that the procedure will be implemented in the future.

In accordance with Title 10 Code of Federal Regulations 2.390 of the NRC's "Rules of Practice," a copy of this letter and its enclosure will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>.

Should you have any questions concerning this inspection or enclosed report, please contact Kevin Null of my staff at (630) 829-9854.

Sincerely,



Patricia J. Pelke, Chief  
Materials Licensing Branch  
Division of Nuclear Materials Safety

Docket No.: 030-34325  
License No.: 03-23853-01VA  
Permit No.: 34-26267-01

Enclosure:  
NRC Form 591M

**SAFETY INSPECTION REPORT AND COMPLIANCE INSPECTION**

1. LICENSEE/LOCATION INSPECTED:  Department of Veterans Affairs Under Secretary for Health Washington, D.C. Location: VA Medical Center: Chillicothe, Ohio  REPORT NUMBER(S) 11-34		2. NRC/REGIONAL OFFICE  Region III U. S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission 2443 Warrenville Road, Suite 210 Lisle, IL 60532-4352	
3. DOCKET NUMBER(S) 030-34325	4. LICENSE NUMBER(S) 03-23853-01VA	5. DATE(S) OF INSPECTION 12/01/2011	

**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:

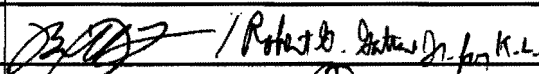
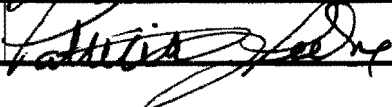
- 1. Based on the inspection findings, no violations were identified.
- 2. Previous violation(s) closed.
- 3. The violation(s), specifically described to you by the inspector as non-cited violations, are not being cited because they were self-identified, non-repetitive, and corrective action was or is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

Non-cited violation(s) were discussed involving the following requirement(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 in accordance with NRC Enforcement Policy. This form is a NOTICE OF VIOLATION, which may be subject to posting in accordance with 10 CFR 19.11.  
(Violations and Corrective Actions)

**Statement of Corrective Actions**

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	Bill Lin/Ken Lambert	 / Robert B. Gattuso Jr. for K.L.	12/20/11
BRANCH CHIEF	Patricia Pelke		12/20/2011

**Docket File Information**

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<p>3. DOCKET NUMBER(S)</p> <p>030-34325</p>	<p>4. LICENSE NUMBER(S)</p> <p>03-23853-01VA</p>	<p>5. DATE(S) OF INSPECTION</p> <p>12/01/2011</p>
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<p>6. INSPECTION PROCEDURES USED</p> <p>87130</p>	<p>7. INSPECTION FOCUS AREAS</p> <p>3.01-3.07</p>
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**SUPPLEMENTAL INSPECTION INFORMATION**

<p>1. PROGRAM CODE(S)</p> <p>2120</p>	<p>2. PRIORITY</p>	<p>3. LICENSEE CONTACT</p> <p>Gary Williams</p>	<p>4. TELEPHONE NUMBER</p> <p>(501) 257-1573</p>
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Main Office Inspection                      Next Inspection Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Field Office Inspection    VA Medical Center, Chillicothe, Ohio

Temporary Job Site Inspection \_\_\_\_\_

**PROGRAM SCOPE**

VA Medical Center in Chillicothe, Ohio, is a Veterans Affairs (VA) facility authorized under a Veterans Health Administration permit for limited scope medical use. The Department of VA is authorized to issue permits to VA facilities under the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's (NRC) Master Materials License: 03-23853-01VA. The Permittee VA Medical Center is authorized for Title 10 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 35.100 and 35.200 use of byproduct for medical diagnostic procedures only. The permit authorizes possession and use of byproduct materials only at the Permittee's facility located at 17273 State Route 104, Chillicothe, Ohio. There are two nuclear medicine technologists (NMT) at the facility performing approximately 520 diagnostic procedures each year. The Permittee receives unit doses from two local nuclear pharmacies in the morning. After hours, the deliveries were made under VA Police service escort. The Permittee hired a radiation safety consultant to provide services such as quarterly audits of the Permittee's radiation safety program, semi-annual inventory, and radiation safety training.

**Performance Observations**

The inspectors observed the NMT perform the following tasks: calibration of the dose calibrator and well counter, preparing a unit dose for administration, wipe surveys, and daily radiation surveys. The inspectors also observed two patient injections and the NMT took proper ALARA precautions such as using vial shields, wore proper dosimetry and personal protection equipment. The inspectors interviewed licensee personnel. The licensee personnel demonstrated sufficient knowledge of radiation safety procedures, contamination limits, security requirements, and NRC regulations. The inspectors took confirmatory surveys and no radiation readings were above regulatory compliance limits. The inspectors also reviewed selected records such as dosimetry, package receipts, instrument calibrations, wipe surveys, and radiation survey results.

No violations of NRC requirements were identified.