



Schmucker, Paul, Nohr and Associates

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November 19, 2012

Latischa M. Hanson, M.Sc.
Health Physicist
Region IV – Division of Nuclear Materials Safety
1600 E. Lamar Blvd
Arlington, TX 76011

Re: NRC Inspection
SPN & Associates
Mitchell, SD

Dear Ms. Hanson:

The following is the follow-up information we discussed regarding Nathan Puepke.

In my follow-up on this matter, I found that Mr. Puepke does not have a valid Certification of Radiological, RSO and Operational Training that would allow his use of the nuclear density gauges in our possession. Based on statements made to me by my staff, it is my understanding that Mr. Puepke was scheduled to take a training course offered by the manufacturer but because of scheduling conflicts, was unable to complete the offered training.

I was informed that Mr. Puepke was given the in-house training in the proper use and handling of the equipment by two of the individuals in this office that have completed the Certification of Radiological, RSO and Operational Training and are in possession of a valid certificate. These individuals are Kevin Roth and Chris Haines.

In anticipation of his completing and passing the training course, personnel in this office, without my knowledge or authorization, ordered a radiation monitoring badge from Landauer for Mr. Puepke. During my inquiry, I was told that the radiation monitoring badge was to be used during our in-house training and during field use after Mr. Puepke passed the training course.

The fact that Mr. Puepke was issued a badge without a valid Certification of Radiological, RSO and Operational Training created some confusion in-house. It appears that because there was a radiation monitoring badge, the personnel in our office who were scheduling equipment and personnel made the assumption that Mr. Puepke had the proper training and certificates. As a result, Mr. Puepke was sent into the field with the equipment for use in connection with one project.

I would like to note that during the course of the construction of the project to which Mr. Puepke was assigned, Mr. Haines made weekly visits to the site. During these visits, Mr. Haines monitored the procedures followed by Mr. Puepke to use, store and transport the nuclear density testing gauge equipment. Further, on at least one occasion, Mr. Roth made a special trip to the project site to monitor the procedures followed by Mr. Puepke.

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As a result of the discovery that the equipment was used by non-authorized personnel, I have taken steps within this office to insure that this does not occur again for Mr. Puepke or any other personnel who lack the proper training and certifications.

- Mr. Puepke's radiation monitoring badge has been removed from the storage board and placed in an area to which he does not have access.
- Mr. Puepke and all other staff members have been advised that Mr. Puepke has not successfully completed the Certification of Radiological, RSO and Operational Training and is therefore not authorized to transport or use the nuclear density gauges until such time as the training is successfully completed and the requisite certification is on file.
- The practice of ordering radiation monitoring badges for personnel prior to the successful completion of the Certification of Radiological, RSO and Operational Training has been prohibited.
- A memo has been issued to all personnel reminding them that the transportation and use of the nuclear density gauges without the proper training and certifications is prohibited.

I regret that this lapse in proper procedure has occurred. You may rest assured that I have discussed this issue with the staff members of SPN and have taken steps to insure that it does not re-occur.

I trust that this information is adequate for your use. If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Schmucker, Paul, Nohr & Associates



Harlan J. Quenzer, P.E.
Principal

HJQ:rh

cc: Jay Koch, Radiation Safety Officer