

U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Region IV
1600 E. Lamar Blvd.
Arlington, Texas 76011
Attn: Director, Division of Nuclear Material Safety

Subject: Reportable Leak Tests: License# 11-27610-01
Date: July 6th, 2016

On June 29th, 2016 around 10am a Qal-Tek Associates radiation technician identified two Varian ECD's (both registered Ni-63 electro-plated sealed sources) with positive leak tests results above the critical levels of the gas flow proportional counter (sn: 44643 – 7.1% efficiency for Ni-63). The net cpm for the 8mCi ECD (model: 02-001972-00, serial number: A544) was 1840cpm (0.0117uCi) and for the 15mCi ECD (model: 02-001972-00, serial number A8118) the net cpm was 4060cpm (0.026 uCi).

The radiation technician was verifying the contents of a client's package in the Building 3 confinement facility that was shipped to Qal-Tek Associates address at; 3998 Commerce Circle, Idaho Falls, ID 83401. The outside of the package did not indicate any contamination when Qal-Tek received the package. Only the inside bottom face of the box indicated contamination of 60 net cpm. This portion of the box was removed for proper DAW disposal at a licensed facility.

The radiation technician halted work, notified her co-worker, contacted the supervisor and confirmed that contamination was not present on her person or on surfaces of the work area per the procedure in order to prevent the spread of contamination. The Varian ECD (sn: A544) sealed source was decontaminated, the port holes in the device were taped shut, sealed in a plastic bag labeled with caution-radioactive material: Ni-63 leaker, and isolated from the work area in the biosafety cabinet. When no contamination was confirmed on personnel or facilities the RSO was notified. The RSO re-checked facility surfaces for contamination. The work bench still had some contamination of about 105 net cpm. This was communicated to the RT's and their manager for further decontamination. The radiation technician took extra personal protective precautions to isolate the contamination and proceeded with verifying the rest of the package contents (14 ECD's). Once again, during the package content verification process a 15 mCi Varian ECD (sn: A8118) also had a positive leak test above the instrument critical level. The radiation technician halted work, notified her co-worker, contacted the supervisor and confirmed that contamination was not present on her person or on surfaces of the work area per the procedure in order to prevent the spread of contamination. The source was sealed in a plastic bag labeled with caution-radioactive material: Ni-63 leaker, and placed in the biosafety cabinet for isolation from the work area. When no contamination was confirmed on personnel or facilities the RSO was notified by the manager. The RSO asked the Qal-Tek client manager to notify them of the leaking Ni-63 sources with a strong recommendation that they survey their facilities for contamination. The sources will be sealed in another bag and placed in a drum for proper disposal at a licensed LLRW disposal facility.

Sincerely,

Michael Albanese

Michael Albanese
Qal-Tek Associates, RSO
