



*Excellence in Truth and Service*

December 3, 2018  
Office of the Provost and  
Chief Academic Officer

MEMORANDUM

TO: HU Department Chairs

FROM: Anthony K. Wutoh, Ph.D., R. Ph.  
Provost & Chief Academic Officer

SUBJECT: **SURVEY OF ANY RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL AT HU FACILITIES TO SUBMIT  
TO THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION (AFFIRMATIVE RESPONSE REQUIRED)**

---

This memo follows a previous memo to all HU department chairs, which was issued on April 19, 2018 (attached), relating to the identification of radioactive material in a laboratory on campus. Following my request for inspection of laboratories on campus, and reporting of any unusual findings, only the Department of Physics and Astronomy and the Department of Engineering responded definitively. As a result, the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) issued an apparent violation due to the identification of an unlicensed radioisotope (Ac- 227) in a Department of Physics laboratory. The NRC considered this apparent violation for escalated enforcement action, including potential civil penalties. Although the NRC agreed that the Howard University Radiation Safety Officer (RSO) took immediate corrective actions to control and secure the Actinium isotope, including its proper disposal, the NRC is not convinced that there may not be another recurrence.

In the light of this current event and the previous identification of unauthorized radioisotopes in the Department of Physics (2008), the NRC is requesting that we conduct a comprehensive radiation survey in all research labs at HU.

Particularly, the NRC wants to include a list of the laboratories that have been, or will be checked, including the result that need to be forwarded in writing, within 30 days of their notice. As the NRC would like to ensure that there are no additional isotopes present in any of the HU labs, it is critical that each Department Chair communicates with their faculty members to ensure that their labs are free from any unauthorized radioactive materials. Any additional findings may jeopardize the HU research license.

**I am requesting that all department chairs inform this office in writing, within 7 business days from the date of this memo, whether or not, there is any identified unauthorized radioactive materials in departmental laboratories, so that the inspection could be completed prior to the winter break.** If you do find any unauthorized radioactive materials, please contact the radiation safety office immediately (Dr. Satya Bose, [satya.bose@howard.edu](mailto:satya.bose@howard.edu), 202-806-7216) to take necessary actions for compliance. In summary, we will need the following; a) list of all laboratories in you department, b) confirmation that the laboratory has been checked for any unauthorized radioactive materials, c) statement from the Chair, or signature on the attached form confirming compliance.

Thank you in advance for your assistance and prompt attention to this matter.