

U. S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
OFFICE OF INSPECTION AND ENFORCEMENT
REGION V

Report No. 81-02

License No. 46-09750-02 Priority IV Category G

Licensee : U. S. Public Health Service Hospital

Post Office Box 3145

Seattle, Washington 98114

Facility Name: _____

Inspection at: U.S.P.H.S. Hospital, 1141 14th Avenue South, Seattle, Washington

Inspection conducted: June 23, 1981

Inspectors: H. E. Book, for 6/29/81
M. Lamastra, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, NRC Headquarters Date Signed

A. Johnson 6/29/81
A. Johnson, Acting Director, Enforcement and Investigations, RV Date Signed

H. E. Book 6/29/81
H. E. Book, Chief, Radiological Safety Branch Date Signed

B. A. Riedlinger 6/29/81
B. A. Riedlinger, Radiation Specialist Date Signed

Approved by: B. A. Riedlinger for 6/29/81
R. D. Thomas, Chief, Materials Radiation Protection Section Date Signed

Approved by: H. E. Book 6/29/81
H. E. Book, Chief, Radiological Safety Branch Date Signed

Summary:

Enforcement Conference on June 23, 1981 (Report No. 81-02)

Items discussed at enforcement conference:

1. NRC enforcement policies and procedures.
2. Compliance history of the USPHS Hospital, Seattle and items of noncompliance associated with the May 26 - 28, 1981 inspection.
3. NRC actions to be taken in the present situation.
4. Possible future actions by the NRC.
5. Other matters of concern to NRC.

The need for increased management control, an active Radiation Safety Committee, and a centralized radiation safety program were stressed.

The enforcement conference involved a total of eight hours on site by four NRC representatives.

DETAILS

1. Enforcement Conference Participants

Dr. R. K. Tompkins, Hospital Director
Ms. Ina J. Holley, Assistant Administrator
Dr. Robert Griep, Chief, Nuclear Medicine
Mr. Ralph M. Baltzo, Consultant
Mr. Robert Verellen, State of Washington, DSHS
Mr. M. Lamastra, Nuclear Reactor Regulation, NRC Headquarters
Mr. A. Johnson, Acting Director, Enforcement and Investigations, Region V
Mr. H. E. Book, Chief, Radiological Safety Branch, Region V
Ms. B. A. Riedlinger, Radiation Specialist, Region V

2. Enforcement Conference

On June 23, 1981, an enforcement conference was held at the U. S. Public Health Service Hospital, Seattle, Washington with the individuals listed above to discuss the findings of a routine safety inspection conducted on May 26 - 28, 1981. During the inspection, eight items of noncompliance were identified. These items were reviewed at the enforcement conference prior to the issuance of a Notice of Violation.

This enforcement conference was announced in a letter to the licensee dated June 12, 1981 (copy attached).

Mr. A. Johnson, Acting Director, Enforcement and Investigations, Region V, described NRC enforcement policies and procedures and provided licensee representatives with copies of the October 7, 1980 Federal Register notice which states the current policy. Escalated enforcement actions, such as civil penalties, or suspension or revocation of the license were discussed. Mr. Johnson emphasized that Supplements IV and VII of the Federal Register notice were directly applicable to the hospital's program. Items in the Notice of Violation reference the appropriate supplements.

Ms. B. Riedlinger, Radiation Specialist, discussed the enforcement history of the hospital, outlined the items of noncompliance, and discussed the issuance of the Notice of Violation. A copy of Appendix A of the Notice of Violation, which lists the items of noncompliance, is attached to this report.

Mr. H. E. Book, Chief, Radiological Safety Branch, states that the severity of the items of noncompliance were categorized in levels IV and V as stated in Appendix A of the Notice of Violation. He also remarked that Severity Level IV items are considered to be rather serious in nature. The enforcement conference was held to assure that the items of noncompliance are understood and to emphasize the importance of preventing their recurrence. The Notice of Violation will be the sole enforcement action at this time. However, if the results of an early reinspection show repetition of these items of noncompliance, escalated enforcement actions may be taken.

3. Other matters of concern to the NRC

Mr. Book commented that the enforcement policy and the items of noncompliance were fully discussed, but there were other matters of concern to the NRC which should also be addressed. These matters related to radiation safety but did not involve noncompliance with the regulations or with license conditions.

- a. Physical surveys should be conducted and documented to verify compliance with License Condition 14., which requires patients containing iodine-131 for the treatment of thyroid carcinoma to remain hospitalized until the residual activity is 30 millicuries or less.
- b. After a thyroid carcinoma patient vacates a hospital room, release surveys are conducted by Dr. Griep. These surveys should be documented.
- c. Ventilation should be adequate in laboratory areas, and fume hood air flow should be checked. Concentrated liquid iodine-131 solutions should be used in a fume hood.
- d. The use of stable iodine as a thyroid blocking agent should be unnecessary if ventilation is adequate and if good health physics practices are followed.
- e. Contamination levels in work areas should be regularly monitored and controlled.
- f. Laboratory wastes must be properly labeled and packaged.
- g. A centralized radiation safety program should be established.

Mr. Lamastra remained at the licensee's facility at the conclusion of the meeting to discuss with the licensee and his consultant the information necessary in the new application. The new application is intended to continue and expand the research program, and to better describe an improved nuclear medicine program.