

# “Negative Ion” Technology—What You Should Know

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You may have heard about colorful silicone wristbands and athletic tape infused with minerals that are supposed to release “negative ions.” You might even be wearing one. They are touted as improving balance and strength, enhancing flexibility and motion, and improving mental focus and alertness. They’ve been sold on the Internet or in retail stores across the U.S.

The minerals these products contain can vary from volcanic ash and titanium to less familiar ones such as tourmaline, zeolite, germanium and monazite sand. They may also contain naturally occurring radioactive elements, including uranium and thorium. In trace amounts, these materials do not warrant much attention. But the radioactive emissions—that is to say gamma rays—from several of these products were detected on entry to the country by U.S. Customs and Border Protection officials using radiation monitoring equipment.

While they may be radioactive, these products are not expected to create any health impacts. The amount of radiation given off by these products is well below the level that would cause any health concern or illness, even if worn over several years.

You may have heard about colorful silicone wristbands and athletic tape infused with minerals that are supposed to release “negative ions.” You might even be wearing one.

But NRC licensing requirements for uranium and thorium depend on the amount of radioactive material present. We commissioned the Oak Ridge National Laboratory to do an analysis that found enough radioactive thorium in several ion technology products that they require an NRC license for manufacture, distribution and possession in the U.S.

NRC staff experts on radiation worked with federal agencies and state regulators to determine the most appropriate path forward. Products containing negative ion technology — that is to say containing licensable amounts of radioactive material — should not be sold at the present time because they have not been licensed, as required, by the NRC.

Anyone wishing to dispose of a negative ion product may simply put it in their trash. This is OK because, although the amount of radioactive material requires licenses for manufacture and sale, it does not require any special handling or disposal.

We cannot say whether these products work as advertised. If you have them or know someone who does, our best advice is to throw them away. Anyone with health concerns should talk to their doctor. In the meantime, we'll continue to do all we can to make sure they are being regulated properly.



**Author: Moderator**

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## 5 thoughts on ““Negative Ion” Technology—What You Should Know”

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**Dr Sims**

July 7, 2016 at 5:04 am

Well some nuke plants can cause health risks and especially the wastage in the surrounding area.

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### **Ashish**

July 31, 2014 at 7:59 am

I think the basis was clearly explained that this kind of bands contain materials like volcanic ash, Zeolite, germanium and monazite sand. Prevention is always better then cure my friend.

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### **Quiet Think**

July 29, 2014 at 8:13 am

To state “our best advice is the throw them away” is quite inappropriate given that their is no health danger. It sends the wrong message and it has no basis, or at least that basis is not explained. The consumer can only be left with the impression that there is a radiological risk, and for any practical measure, there is zero radiological risk. Maybe, due to the questionable origins of these products, there are other materials in the product that actually do present some health risk.

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### **gmax137**

July 28, 2014 at 3:29 pm

“Products containing negative ion technology — that is to say containing licensable amounts of radioactive material — should not be sold at the present time because they have not been licensed, as required, by the NRC... although the amount of radioactive material requires licenses for manufacture and sale, it does not require any special handling or disposal.”

Isnt this an opportunity to simplify the regulations? Why does material that “does not require any special handling or disposal” yet require any regulation? Why cant NRC simply say that this stuff is harmless and therefore we don't care about it?

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## **Joey Racano**

July 28, 2014 at 1:54 pm

Imagine anyone wasting words on this when nuke plants are generating 500 lbs of nuke waste each, each day- and new nuke plants are being built!

Joey Racano: 'Weapon of mass discussion'

[www.OceanOutfallGroup.com](http://www.OceanOutfallGroup.com)

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