

## Section 12

# Shipment of Radioactive Materials

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## A. Shipping Regulations

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC), the Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Washington Department of Health (DOH) issue domestic regulations for the safe transportation of radioactive materials. These regulations are adopted from those issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) also has regulations governing the transportation of hazardous materials, radioactive materials, and biohazards as air cargo.

## B. Shipment

All shipments of radioactive material will be performed by or with the direct oversight of Radiation Safety (RS). Radiation Safety must be notified prior to any shipment of radioactive material, either on or off campus. This ensures that all radioactive material is transported in accordance with all applicable regulations.

Occasionally RS will instruct a laboratory in the proper procedures for “empty,” “limited quantity,” or “instruments and articles” shipments of radioactive materials, which are made on a regular basis and are similar in nature. These shipments must always be approved by RS in writing.

## 1. Legal Authorization

Before shipping radioactive materials, the University of Washington must obtain written documentation that the recipients have legal authorization to have this material and activity in their possession. Normally, this documentation is a radioactive materials license.

## 2. Packaging

Radioactive materials must be shipped in properly authorized containers and be checked for contamination and external radiation levels prior to shipment.

## 3. Shipping Documents

All commercial shipments of radioactive materials must be accompanied by proper shipping documents.

## 4. Fines

Improper shipment of radioactive materials can lead to severe fines against individuals and organizations as well as the potential suspension or termination of a Radiation Use Authorization.

## C. Portable Devices Containing Sealed Sources

Radiation Safety must be informed at least one month prior to the transportation of portable devices (such as gas chromatograph devices containing radioactive electron capture detectors) to off campus locations. This notification must include the location to which the device will be moved and the duration of time it will remain at that location.

RS will notify the WA DOH and request reciprocity to use these devices at locations where the UW Radioactive Materials License does not apply. RS will either perform the shipment or provide required training and procedures for transportation of the devices.

All portable devices must be in secured locations and are subject to periodic testing and inventory (see Section 15 - Sealed Sources).

## D. Transport within the University System

To protect the university community, Radiation Safety adheres to all regulations to the extent deemed appropriate for any campus transfer of radioactive materials.

### 1. Hand Carried Transport

When transporting radioactive materials between rooms or buildings on campus, precautions must be taken to minimize the risk of accidents and the risk of exposing the public to radiation. A secondary container with enough absorbent material to retain the radioactive materials is required to minimize spills in the event of breakage or leakage of the primary container. The secondary container must be labeled “Caution: Radioactive Materials” along with the radionuclide and activity, and should provide adequate shielding if necessary.

### 2. Vehicular Transport

**According to UW policy, radioactive materials must never be transported by public conveyance or via the campus shuttle.** In special approved situations, private or University owned vehicles may be used for the transport of radioactive materials. Contact RS for assistance with transport of radioactive materials by vehicle.

## E. Requesting a Radioactive Material Shipment

A Radioactive Material Shipment Request web form must be submitted to RS at least 72 hours or 3 business days prior to the date of domestic shipments. The request form is located at the following link: [RAM Shipment Request](#).

International shipments require additional time and resources to notify all regulatory authorities, apply for special permits, obtain licenses and permits, and complete all required documentation including international customs documents. Therefore requests to ship radioactive material to international destinations must be submitted to RS at least one month prior to the date of shipment.