

Section 8

Worker Rights and Responsibilities*Contents*

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Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 246-222 establishes requirements for notices, instruction, and reports by the University of Washington to individuals engaged in work with radiation. The Code further provides options available to such individuals in connection with State of Washington Department of Health (DOH) inspections. The regulations in Chapter 246-222 apply to all persons who receive, possess, use, own, or transfer a source of radiation licensed or registered by the University of Washington with the Department of Health.

A. Posting of Notices to Workers

1. Radiation Safety Office

Washington Administrative Code requires certain documents be available for inspection by individuals engaged in work with radiation. The documents listed below are available for inspection at the University of Washington, Radiation Safety Office, 205 Hall Health Center.

a. Regulations

The regulations in WAC Chapter 246-221 and Chapter 246-222.

b. License

The UW Radioactive Materials License WN-C001-1.

c. X-ray Registrations

UW x-ray registrations for Hall Health Center, Harborview Medical Center, Non-Human Use, Nuclear Physics Laboratory, Roosevelt Clinic, School of Dentistry, Sports Medicine Clinic, and University of Washington Medical Center.

d. Conditions/Amendments

Conditions or documents incorporated in the license by reference and amendments thereto.

e. Operating Procedures

Operating procedures applicable to work under the license or registrations.

f. Notices of Noncompliance

Any notice of noncompliance involving radiological working conditions, proposed imposition of civil penalty, order issued pursuant to Chapter 246-220 (General Provisions), or any response from the University of Washington.

2. Radiation Areas

The following documents, notices, and forms must be replaced if altered or defaced:

a. Emergency Procedures

Emergency Procedures must be conspicuously posted in areas where radiation workers will see them. These procedures should be posted in all areas where radioactive materials are used.

b. “Notice to Employees” (RHF-3)

Department of Health Form RHF-3 “Notice to Employees,” described in greater detail below, must also be conspicuously posted in all areas where radiation is used.

B. RHF-3 “Notice to Employees”

The Department of Health Form RHF-3, “Notice to Employees,” is posted in radiation use areas on campus and should be read by employees. This document gives a brief overview of worker’s rights and responsibilities. This includes a listing of required posted documentation noted in the previous section, a listing of what is covered by the regulations, worker’s rights to information about exposure history (if applicable), and worker’s rights to make inquiries or allegations to the DOH regarding suspected non-compliance.

C. Worker’s Responsibility

It is a radiation worker’s responsibility to protect themselves, co-workers, patients (if any), and the public from undue risks of radiation, to the extent of the worker’s control. This can be fostered by becoming familiar with radiation protection procedures in this manual, provisions of the Department of Health regulations, and the operating procedures, which apply to an individual’s work.

D. Instruction to Workers

WAC 246-222-030 lists specific instructions to be provided to individuals likely to receive an occupational dose. Although some workers may work in situations where they could not receive a measurable occupational dose, all radiation workers at the University of Washington should still be aware of these provisions of the Washington Administrative Code. Instruction in this information is usually accomplished through the Radiation Safety Training Class and job specific instruction from the Authorized Investigator or laboratory manager.

1. Storage, Transfer, Use

All Radiation workers shall be kept informed of the storage, transfer or use of sources of radiation in the Authorized Investigator’s facility. This is the responsibility of the Authorized Investigator or his/her designee.

2. Health Protection Considerations

Radiation workers shall be instructed in the health protection considerations for the worker and potential offspring associated with exposure to radiation or radioactive material, in precautions or procedures to minimize exposure, and in the purposes and function of protective devices.

3. Observance of Requirements

Radiation workers shall be instructed in and instructed to observe, to the extent within the worker's control, the applicable provisions of the DOH Regulations, DOH Form RHF-3 "Notice to Employees" and license conditions for the protection of personnel from exposures to radiation or radioactive material.

4. Notification to Department of Health

a. Violation Notification

A radiation worker shall be instructed that any worker or representative of workers who believes that a violation of the regulations, license conditions, or unnecessary exposure to radiation exists or occurred, may request an inspection by the Department of Health by oral or written notification. The notification shall set forth specific grounds for the complaint. Any such notification to the Department of Health is confidential.

b. Improper Actions

A radiation worker has the right to notify the Department of Health if the individual suspects improper actions by a licensee/registrant, or conditions, which may lead to a violation of these regulations, the license/registration, or unnecessary exposure to radiation or radioactive materials.

5. Discrimination

Radiation workers shall be instructed that employment discrimination by a licensee/registrant against an employee, because of actions described in WAC 246-222-030, is prohibited.

6. Notification to Supervisor and Radiation Safety Officer

Radiation workers shall be instructed as to their responsibility to report promptly to their supervisor any condition which may constitute, lead to, or cause a violation of Washington Administrative Code regulations and licenses or unnecessary exposure to radiation or radioactive material. If satisfactory response is not received from their supervisor, they may then contact the Radiation Safety Officer.

7. Unusual Occurrence/Malfunction

Radiation workers shall be instructed in the appropriate response to warnings made in the event of any unusual occurrence or malfunction that may involve exposure to radiation or radioactive material.

8. Radiation Exposure Reports

Radiation workers shall be advised as to the radiation exposure reports which workers shall be furnished pursuant to WAC 246-222-040. These records and reports are discussed in the Radiation Safety Training class and in Section 6 of this manual, Personnel Exposure and Monitoring.