actual date would be confirmed either by e-mail or by arrangement on delivery. After that initial two week period RPO will collect outstanding badges as required upon e-mail request. Note - badges will no longer be transferred by internal mail. RPO will have a record of badge issue and will scan returned badges prior to transfer to Approved Dosimetry Service. Any badges not returned by 1 month after the issue date will be considered as lost and will incur a charge of £20 per badge. There will be NO exceptions - no returned badge = £20 invoice automatically. This is what the University will be charged for missing badges.

Much of the work of Radiation Protection Office is to encourage people to use common-sense with regard to their own safety and that of others around them. There are many regulations and guidance notes which set out good working practice and these can be referenced on the RPO website. Unfortunately it is also part of our work to impose a measure of ‘red-tape’ in that there are certain records that are required to be established and maintained by various regulations. We have to demonstrate to Regulatory Inspectors that the University is in compliance but we try to make this task as easy as possible for departmental supervisors.

WHAT IS RADIATION PROTECTION?

Contrary to popular belief, Radiation Protection does not involve persons walking around in lead-lined underwear and all-in-one plastic suits. Much of the work of Radiation Protection Office is to encourage people to use common sense with regard to their own safety and that of others around them. There are many regulations and guidance notes which set out good working practice and these can be referenced on the RPO website.

TLD DOSIMETERS

The current TLD dosimeter system is using badges, some of which are almost 30 years old. These are now proving unreliable and will be uneconomic to replace. We have therefore decided to change to an outside supplier. The proposed system will, in many ways, work in a similar manner as the current system as far as users are concerned. Badges, albeit slightly different shape, will be issued to departments every two months (as now) from the RPO and should be exchanged promptly with previous issue being returned to RPO for readout. As far as DRS or departmental badge issuer is concerned there will be one difference from current routine and this relates to delivery and collection. We have found that the plastic boxes used to circulate the current badges are frequently suffering damage in the internal mail system. In the proposed scheme badges will be delivered by RPO approximately 4 days before changeover date to the DRS or departmental badge issuer. The exchanged badges will be collected by RPO during the next two weeks -
URANUS

CONTAMINATION MONITORING

For laboratories in which unsealed radioactive material is used it is a mandatory requirement that checks for contamination are done. Procedures for this are set out in the General Local Rules (document LR1) which should be available in each lab.

Frequency of checking is dependent on the experiment but should be at such intervals as dictated by safety considerations. If an experiment is continuous and ongoing then perhaps a weekly contamination check is sufficient. However if the experiment is one-off or infrequent then the contamination check should be carried out at the end of each experiment to ensure that the area is safe for the next user.

The result of contamination checks must be recorded in the contamination log book and should not be merely a tick. Any Inspector (and that includes RPO staff when conducting a lab audit) will expect to see a finite entry at regular intervals. The entry will hopefully be 0 or bgd indicating no contamination found. The means of monitoring including type and serial number of monitor, if applicable, should also be recorded. If, however, some level of contamination is found then immediate efforts must be made to decontaminate the affected area. Method for this can be found in the Contingency Local Rules (LR2)

Before conducting a contamination check with a monitor please ensure that its calibration date is valid. If it is out-of-date please contact RPO on 0151 794 3466 or e-mail at r1ch1@liv.ac.uk to arrange for calibration.

SEALED SOURCES (Leak Testing)

Sealed or Closed sources are predominantly found in one of the university departments, but there are others in which are incorporated into counting units such as scintillation counters. All must be checked annually for leakage.

For sources that are accessible the method of testing is known as wipe testing. Dampen a cotton bud or swab of cotton wool with distilled water. Using the shaft of the cotton bud or forceps holding the cotton wool, wipe around the exterior of the source but take care not to abrade the surface of any foil or matrix. Hold the wipe in front of a suitable contamination monitor and check the reading. If it is greater than twice normal background reading for the monitor then assess the contamination that has been wiped off. If less than twice background it may be assumed that there is no leakage from the source. A record of the test should be logged and passed to the Departmental Radiation Protection Supervisor.

For inaccessible sources that are housed in scintillation counters it may reasonably be assumed that the background counting levels of the unit will increase if the reference source has any leakage. Care should therefore be taken to note any drift in background count readings.

For other inaccessible sources a wipe test should be done within and beneath the source housing as close as possible to the source.

DOCUMENTS

The documents on the website have recently been reviewed and some revisions have been made.

Please log in regularly to the Radiation Protection Office website for information.

LASER POINTERS (inappropriate use)

You may well have seen the publicity associated with inappropriate use of laser pointers including attempted blinding of aircraft pilots.

Laser pointers are a useful tool for presentations etc but are not intended as toys. Even the lowest power lasers can startle and therefore potentially cause accidents if shone in a person’s eye. DON’T!

MICROWAVE OVENS

Radiation Protection Office has a policy that all new microwave ovens used by staff or students at the University of Liverpool should be checked for radiation safety. The check should be repeated if any oven is suspected to be damaged or after 3 years.

A radiation safety test can be requested by e-mail to rad.pro@liv.ac.uk with subject ‘microwave’ and including the department, location and contact name. We will then e-mail with a proposed date/time for a test

Please send any comments on the work of Radiation Protection Office to rad.pro@liv.ac.uk