MEMORANDUM

To: Authorized Users of Radioactive Materials and Radiation Machines

From: Steve Eckberg, Assistant Director

Date: November 25, 1996

Subject: Acetic Acid Used as a Decontamination Agent

Acetic acid has been used on campus to remove radioactive contamination on some surfaces. I would like to remind users of this technique that acetic acid is a hazardous material and the use of this chemical may generate unwanted quantities of mixed waste. In addition, vapors from concentrated amounts of acetic acid can cause inhalation or skin surface irritation hazards to individuals involved in the operation or to any subsequent waste handlers. The latter situation recently caused a member of the RSO staff to become exposed to excessive levels of acetic acid.

If acetic acid is used as a decontaminating agent, it should be used only after other decontamination techniques have proved unsuccessful, and then only in the small quantities sufficient to clean the surface in question.

THIS MEMORANDUM SHOULD BE FILED, FOLLOWING APPROPRIATE PROMULGATION OF ITS CONTENTS, AT THE END OF SECTION XVI OF YOUR COPY OF THE RADIATION PROTECTION PROGRAM MANUAL.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate in contacting me at 5-8574.

cc: RSO Staff