MEMORANDUM

TO: Authorized Users of Radioactive Materials and Radiation Machines

FROM: Steve Eckberg, Director

DATE: November 30, 2006

SUBJECT: Institution of Performance - Based Inspections

During our Washington State Department of Health inspection on September 19 and 20, 2006, one of the recommendations made for program improvement was to refocus our lab survey program to a more "performance-based audit" system. This system has been used throughout the industry for a number of years.

The Radiation Safety Office's (RSO) refocusing efforts will involve a broader audit approach which will include observations of work practices as well as dialogues with authorized users and their staff regarding operations and safety practices. It is hoped that this approach will increase communication among all members of the radiation safety community and increase the RSO's understanding of specific research safety practices, operations and needs.

This new approach may cause some initial uneasiness by authorized users and their staff with an increased presence by the RSO staff. However, with this focused approach we will also be developing a more flexible survey (audit) frequency for the RSO based upon meeting the needs of the authorized users and the requirements of the RSO.

After initial planning efforts the RSO foresees beginning its performance-based inspection program during the first quarter of 2007.

Your patience and understanding is appreciated in the effort. If you have any comments or questions do not hesitate to contact me at 5-8574 or eckstevr@wsu.edu.

cc: RSC Members
    RSO Staff