



Cascade Chapter



Avalanche

The official newsletter of the
Cascade Chapter of the Health Physics Society

Winter 2011 Issue

<http://www.hpschapters.org/cascade/>

President's Corner

by Julia Sober

Happy New Year to the Cascade Chapter!

We have scheduled a Winter Meeting this year for January 14th at McMenamins Olympic Club in Centralia, WA. There are some interesting topics to be covered, and I hope you will all be able to attend.

As you are probably aware, the NRC published a proposed rule in June 2010 that would place the security requirements for use of Category 1 and Category 2 quantities of radioactive material into a new Part 37 of Title 10 of the Code of Federal Regulations. There are some rather drastic changes proposed to background checks and other requirements for anyone needing access to these sources in the course of their work.

I highly recommend reviewing the proposed rule and sending comments to the NRC on how these changes might impact your program. The comment period has been extended until January 18, 2011 due to the size and complexity of the proposed rule and the associated draft implementation guidance.

Public comments and supporting materials related to this proposed rule can be found at <http://www.regulations.gov> by searching on Docket ID NRC-2008-0120.

Hope to see you all in Centralia!

Preventing Mistakes

by Carl Bergsagel

If you have been reading the newspapers lately, you may have read several articles published in the New York Times on medical radiation errors that caused serious injury to patients.

What can those of us in the radiation safety business do to help prevent mistakes from occurring with radiation sources in our institution that could adversely impact patient and public health and safety? Here are some things to consider:

1. Use your authority. If you are the Radiation Safety Officer, you have the responsibility to ensure that radiation

producing equipment is tested when first installed and at routine intervals during use. Don't just take someone's word that the equipment was tested—ask to see the documentation. Trust, but verify.

2. Check each other's work. If, for example, you are performing shielding design reviews for new radiation machine installations, periodically ask one of your peers to check your results. If there is one thing I have learned in my career, it's the importance of peer review. Anyone can make a mistake, and asking another health physicist to periodically review your work is just good common sense.

3. Check your own work. When I do a calculation, I re-do the calculation in reverse, to see if I get the same results.

4. Check your radiation measurement equipment for proper operation each time you use it. I remember once when I did a radiation safety survey of a cobalt-60 radiation therapy machine after the source was changed. I didn't check my survey meter with a radiation source before I started the survey. After the survey, I checked the meter, and found that it was under-responding by about 40%, which I determined was due to a loss of gas pressure in the ion chamber. It was embarrassing and time consuming, because I had to repeat the entire survey, but it taught me a valuable lesson about the importance of checking my test equipment.

News from the Community Relations Committee

by Philip Campbell

It has been a busy few months for our committee. A lot of exciting things have been going on. If you would like to join the effort of informing the public about health physics please contact me at philipcambell123@gmail.com.

In September 2010, the CCHPS sponsored *Instrument Repair and Calibration Training* provided by Ludlum Measurements, Inc. Two classes were provided, one in Corvallis and the other in Olympia. Both classes were well attended, especially the one in Olympia. I had a chance to talk to participants of the Olympia class, and they all seemed to really enjoy the training. And thanks to the training, we now have a few new members!

On October 8, 2010 I had the pleasure of attending the Oregon Science Teachers Association Meeting in Colton, OR. With the help of Norm Dyer, our chapter staffed a booth in the exhibition hall. I also gave a lecture on the fundamentals of radiation. The booth contained materials to promote the resources available to science teachers for incorporating radiation science into their curriculum. We had information, free handouts, Vernier LabPro equipment (provided by the HPS Science Support Committee), a Geiger counter, and consumer products containing radioactive material. The consumer products and Geiger counter provided a great means to get the teachers to actually stop and talk to us. We were able to talk to many science teachers, and a few even provided us contact information.



The exhibitor booth was staffed by Norm Dyer and Philip Campbell

As a result of attending this meeting, the CCHPS has received an invitation to host a booth at the Salem-Keizer School District's Science Expo on April 20, 2011. This Science Expo will showcase science projects and research from K-12 students as well as allow universities, agencies, and community organizations to showcase their research and/or applied science components. A booth at this meeting will provide our chapter an opportunity to interact directly with students of all ages, parents, and the general public in order to educate them about health physics and radiation safety.

We would also like to host a booth at the Washington Science Teachers Association Meeting in Poulsbo, WA on March 18-20, 2011. This meeting is a lot bigger than the OSTA meeting, so if we want to host a booth I will need some help. If you would like to volunteer your time to staff a booth at this meeting please contact me at the email address listed above.

Finally, I would like to encourage you to look for opportunities to get into your kids' schools or classrooms to talk about what it is we do as health physicists. I went to the career fair at my son's school last year and almost all of the 9th graders that I talked to had never heard about health physics. This is not very surprising. To help increase the visibility of our field, the chapter has purchased key chains that say "Health Physics...think about it!" I also put together a flyer for that career fair which provides

information on a career in health physics. If you find an opportunity to go talk to a school or class, please contact me and I will get these materials to you.

I will now get off my soapbox...enjoy the rest of your winter!

Announcements

New Chapter Officers

During the Annual meeting last May new chapter officers were sworn in. Julia Sober is now the CCHPS President after serving a year as President-Elect. She is a Health Physicist at Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center. The new President-Elect is John Pickering. He is a Health Physicist at The Boeing Company. The new Secretary is Carl Bergsagel. He is a Medical Physicist at the Seattle VA Medical Center. We would like to express our appreciation and thanks to our outgoing officers, Howard Wallace, President, and Philip Campbell, Secretary, for their service.

2011 Chapter Dues

We are now accepting payment for 2011 dues. Dues for 2011 remain the same as last year: \$25 for Plenary membership, \$20 per person for Group membership, and \$12.50 for Student and Member Emeritus membership. You can pay your dues together with your meeting registration at the Jan. 14, 2011 chapter meeting, or mail a check payable to CCHPS to the chapter secretary at the address shown below. More information about the different membership categories and the benefits of each type of membership can be found on the [CCHPS website](#).

2011 Elections

The three offices open for the 2011 election are President-Elect, Treasurer and Member-at-Large. These terms will run from May 2011 to May 2013. The President-Elect becomes President during the second year. If you are interested in running for one of these open offices, please contact the chapter secretary.

Cascade Chapter Officers:

President:	Julia Sober
President-Elect:	John Pickering
Secretary:	Carl Bergsagel
Treasurer:	Mike Zittle
Member-at-Large:	Marge Slauson

Secretary Contact Info:

Mailing Address:
 Carl Bergsagel
 Radiation Oncology (S-174)
 VA Medical Center
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 Seattle, WA 98108

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2011 Winter CCHPS Meeting

The 2011 Winter CCHPS Meeting will be held **Friday January 14, 2011** in the Green Room at McMenamins Olympic Club Hotel, 112 N. Tower Ave., Centralia, WA. McMenamins Olympic Club is a unique, historical building located in downtown Centralia, just a block from the Amtrak station (take the train to the meeting!).

Agenda

- 9:15 Executive Committee Meeting
9:30 Registration (*with coffee, tea, juice, muffins, etc.*)
10:00 Chapter Business Meeting
 Treasurer's Report
 Committee Reports
 Old Business
 New Business
10:30 Presentation – Debra McBaugh (Washington, DOH) – *NCRP 160 – New Pie Chart on Exposure to the Public*
11:00 Presentation – Victoria Barns (Student) – *Advantages of Nuclear Power – High School Student Presentation at Science Fair*
11:30 Presentation – Tom Donohue (The Boeing Company) – *Radio Frequency Surveys – Basic Measurements and Evaluation*
12:00 Presentation – Charles Croft (The Boeing Company) – *Scatter X-ray System for Scanning Aircraft*
12:30 Lunch
 1:30 Presentation – Thomas Essig (Retired NRC) – *Code of Conduct for Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources on the Bases for Current Sources Security Measures in the USA*
 2:00 Presentation – Kristina Hatcher (NNSA) – *NNSA Program for Enhanced Controls*
 2:30 Break (*with coffee, tea, soda, cookies, etc.*)
 2:45 Presentation – Craig Lawrence (Washington, DOH) – *Source Security in Washington State*
 3:15 Table Top Discussion Group – *Discussion of Source Security*
 3:45 Meeting Adjourned

As you can see, we have a full agenda of interesting and timely topics. The entire afternoon session is on Source Security. **We would like to encourage our membership to invite local law enforcement representatives to attend the afternoon session.**

Cost

Prices for the meeting are:

	<u>Meeting Only</u>	<u>Lunch & Meeting</u>
Member	\$25	\$30
Non-member	\$30	\$35

(Cost is \$10 for local law enforcement representatives for lunch and the afternoon session only).

Lunch Menu

Deli Buffet

Mediterranean Pasta Salad

penne pasta with feta cheese, bell pepper, red onion and kalamata olives in a lemon-basil vinaigrette

Sliced Fresh Fruit Tray

Sliced Deli Meats

oven roasted turkey breast, Black Forest ham and roast beef

Sliced Cheese

Tillamook® cheddar, Swiss and pepperjack cheeses

Lettuce, Tomato, Red Onion & Pickles

Assorted Sandwich Spreads

Basket of Sliced Breads

McMenamins Own Freshly Brewed Coffee & Decaf Black & Herbal Teas

Registration

Please send your meeting registration to the chapter secretary as soon as possible, and no later than January 7th. Please indicate on your meeting registration if you want lunch or not. You can register for the meeting by sending an e-mail message to: cascadechapterhps@gmail.com

Parking

There is limited parking adjacent to the hotel. Street and offsite parking are available.

Directions to the Meeting

From the South:

- Take I-5 Exit # 81 toward WA-507/Mellen St.
- Turn RIGHT onto Mellen St./WA-507. Continue to follow WA-507.
- Turn LEFT onto S Tower Ave./WA-507 N. (*S Tower Ave. is just past S Pearl St.*)
- 112 N Tower Ave. is on the RIGHT, just past E Main St.

From the North:

- Take I-5 Exit # 82, Harrison Ave. toward Factory Outlet Way.
- Turn LEFT onto Harrison Ave.
- Harrison Ave. becomes W Main St.
- Turn LEFT onto N Tower Ave./WA-507 N. (*N Tower Ave is just past N Pearl St.*)
- 112 N Tower Ave. is on the RIGHT.

[Click here for a map.](#)